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Monday, 11 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/59/861)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/59/861. It contains a letter dated 1 July 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs the Assembly that 10 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/59/861?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Draft resolution (A/59/L.64)

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that the General Assembly held a joint debate on agenda items 11 and 53 at its 24th through 29th plenary meetings, from 11 to 13 October 2004. In connection with agenda item 53, the Assembly now has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/59/L.64.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.64.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.64 on behalf of the following sponsors: Afghanistan, Belgium, Bhutan, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Fiji, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, the Maldives, Nauru, Palau, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Ukraine and Brazil, as well as the sponsors that have joined the initiative since Thursday, 7 July, namely, Lithuania and the Marshall Islands.

At the outset, I express our sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate, and I commend your outstanding leadership in conducting the work of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth

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session, in particular the preparatory process for the September summit.

As we approach the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, the membership as a whole shares a sense of urgency in promoting the Organization's effectiveness in all areas, particularly in the field of the maintenance of international peace and security. Awareness of the need for change is especially pronounced among all of us.

The sponsors are keenly aware that the consideration of this draft proposal by 191 Members of the United Nations constitutes an historic step in multilateral diplomacy. Its provisions would significantly strengthen this world Organization and truly reform the Security Council, the main organ entrusted by the Charter with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Accumulated experience acquired since the founding of the United Nations demonstrates that in the eyes of our peoples, the realities of power in 1945 were superseded long ago. The security structure established then is now glaringly outdated. The Security Council, in order to effectively carry out its functions and exercise its powers, needs to undergo thorough reform that includes expanding the category of permanent members in order to bring it in line with the contemporary world. Such reform would ensure a better response to the evolving nature and characteristics of threats to peace, as well as more systematic and effective compliance with the Council's decisions. Representativeness and equitable participation must be clearly reflected in the composition of the Security Council. Only through the updated observance of those principles will the legitimacy of the Council's decisions be ensured.

Draft resolution A/59/L.64 aims to expand the membership of the Security Council to reflect new realities. As expressed in the draft, that would shape a balance of forces capable of enhancing the Council's responsiveness to the views and needs of all Member States, in particular developing countries, and of ensuring the adoption of improved working methods.

The draft resolution would objectively establish the mechanisms required to achieve such an outcome, which include making full use of the democratic and universal decision-making processes of the General Assembly. It would also determine future consideration of the question of the veto, and it foresees a review of the Council's effectiveness and composition 15 years after the entry into force of the changes proposed.

As is widely known, our draft builds upon a proposal put forward by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and reiterated by the Secretary-General in his report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). It allows for enhanced participation of all regional groups in the Council's composition.

The group of sponsors comprises countries rich and poor, large and small, islands and landlocked States, as well as a permanent member of the Security Council. In preparing the draft, the sponsors engaged in open, transparent and extensive dialogue with all Member States of the United Nations, both in New York and in capitals. The result reflects the broadest possible scope of views on the matter — indeed, the views of those who strive for genuine, meaningful reform of the Security Council and, in that spirit, constructively participated in the process.

Our draft is being presented to the General Assembly in time for decisions to be taken before September. Its submission after the conclusion of two major summit meetings allowed countries in both Africa and the Caribbean to carefully ponder the pros and cons of the proposed expansion. We have been greatly encouraged by the fact that the African heads of State, speaking with one voice at Sirte, have taken a stand so similar to ours, and by the meeting of the heads of Government of the Caribbean Community in Saint Lucia, at which a significant number of those States indicated that they are inclined to support the proposal.

The purpose of establishing a more balanced composition of the Security Council can be realized only through democratic expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent member categories. That can be achieved through the selection of new permanent members by the General Assembly in order to redress the current situation and to ensure permanent representation for developed and developing countries alike. Moreover, the addition of new permanent members selected by the Assembly would establish a direct link of accountability between the new permanent members and the general membership. The envisaged review mechanism constitutes an additional guarantee to that effect. Promoting substantive and meaningful structural changes in the Security Council

will also result in a revision of its practices and working methods.

Taking a decision on this draft will mean setting in motion a process that will, no doubt, give tremendous impetus to multilateralism and to the democratization of international relations and bring about a more balanced and more efficient Council. It is a process that, once started, will be owned by the entire United Nations membership.

As the United Nations prepares for the convening of the September summit, it has become increasingly evident that security and development are interconnected in a manner that does not allow for progress in one area without consistent advances in the other. A more comprehensive, updated definition of the present-day threats confronting mankind is essential to ensure that the social, economic and human rights concerns of the peoples of the United Nations are duly taken into account as the United Nations advances towards more efficiently ensuring peace and security.

The ghastly threat of terrorist attacks — which, once more, have revealed in a shocking manner the indiscriminate brutality and cruelty of that scourge — is another, sadly recurrent, reminder of the need to update our threat perceptions and appropriately adapt appropriate structures to deal with them. It is clear that the Council's future effectiveness is also contingent upon the permanent presence of major financial contributors and those who are most willing and able to contribute to the work of the United Nations.

Criticism of our proposal so far has failed to realistically address the core issue of permanent membership. Restricting the expansion of the Council to the category of non-permanent members would not only mean maintaining the status quo, but also risk increasing the disparity in its composition. It would do nothing to correct its structural imbalances. Some have also stated that a proposal such as ours should be subject to a unanimous decision — a claim the true objective of which is plain for all to see: it is designed simply to block the process.

Our response is to let the General Assembly make use of its universal and democratic decision-making process, the same method by which parliaments daily go about their business. As for the argument that working to bring this issue to a conclusion after 12 years of discussion is somehow still premature, we can only consider it an attempt to beguile.

I must emphasize the shared perception among the sponsors and beyond that the successful conclusion of the effort to reform the Security Council would enhance that body's legitimacy and representativeness and constitute a very important boost for the strengthening of the Organization, as well as ensure the successful outcome of the September summit meeting. We are convinced that, both in substance and in procedure, our proposal effectively and unambiguously promotes, in a direct and concrete manner, the democratization of international relations under the auspices of the United Nations and facilitates the achievement of peace and security in full harmony with the observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter. That goal is now within reach. An opportunity such as this must not be missed.

In conclusion, it is important to recall the remark made by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, that no United Nations reform effort would be complete without the reform of the Security Council, and his recommendation that we deal with the issue before September. Perhaps more than anyone else, he has been aware of the dire need to preserve and strengthen the United Nations as the only multilateral universal instrument for addressing and resolving the multifaceted and increasingly complex crises that affect humanity. Once more, we would do well to heed his advice.

I wish to make clear in this regard that we do not seek to impose a vote on this matter before it has been comprehensively discussed by Member States in this debate. As has been the case since the establishment of the group of four 10 months ago, and particularly now, with the participation of all of the sponsors, we stand ready to advance the dialogue with all those groups that genuinely wish to promote the strengthening of the Organization and of its capacity to deal with contemporary threats to peace and security. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Germany, India, Japan and my own country stated in London last Friday, 8 July,

> "Against the backdrop of the decisions of the recent Summit of the African Union in Sirte and the CARICOM Summit in Saint Lucia, the ministers reiterated their readiness to continue dialogue with the African Union and CARICOM,

as well as the co-sponsors of the draft resolution and the United Nations membership at large."

Putting this decision into practice, they met on that occasion with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, in his capacity as member of the core group of the follow-up mechanism on the reform of the United Nations established by the African Union to review developments at the African Union Summit and to discuss prospects for common action in the immediate future with regard to the expansion and reform of the Security Council.

In presenting the present proposal, the sponsors have taken a bold step that paves the way for real, meaningful change in the Organization. Let us all follow through in our determination to bring about a better world.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting and to express my delegation's gratitude for your efforts to advance the United Nations reform agenda. In this context, I should also like to reiterate Jordan's support for all efforts aimed at achieving the hoped-for reforms and to express our utmost appreciation for all the valuable ideas presented in that regard.

United Nations reform will not be complete unless we reform the Security Council by enhancing its working methods and expanding the membership. In general, therefore, Jordan supports draft resolution A/59/L.64, which is before us today. We are utterly convinced that the draft resolution is a step in the right direction to sustainable and effective reform. Furthermore, in supporting the framework set out in the draft resolution, Jordan is upholding its prior commitments regarding Security Council expansion and reform. Nevertheless, we believe that there is still room to improve the language on enhancing the working methods of the Council by using more of the ideas put forward in the debate over the past few months.

We agree with the view that the membership of the Council should be expanded in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. The draft resolution provides a democratic basis for expanding the membership in which, we believe, the Group of Arab States should be represented at all times.

Today, we have an historic opportunity to make a change for the better. Let us take advantage of the existing momentum and capitalize on this opportunity to do what is in the best interests of our Organization.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): I would like first of all to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this historic plenary meeting, which not only presages the success of the September summit, but also marks an important juncture with respect to the future of the United Nations. We are confident that Member States will be able to make the necessary decisions under your strong and wise leadership; you can count on my delegation's fully cooperation.

At the same time, as a sponsor of the draft framework resolution, Japan would like to fully endorse the introductory statement just made by the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Sardenberg, on behalf of the sponsors.

As the international community rises to meet the challenges we face in today's world, the United Nations must not be left on the sidelines. We must reform the United Nations into an Organization capable of addressing the realities of the twenty-first century. In other words, we must create a new United Nations for the new era, as Prime Minister Koizumi stated last year from this podium.

Among those changes, the core must be the reform of the Security Council. As the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must fulfil its role with the maximum cooperation and participation of the international community. For that purpose, the Council must improve its representation to better reflect today's world.

In addition, the Security Council must be provided with adequate resources to address challenges effectively. Countries with the will and resources to play a major role in international peace and security must always take part in the Council's decision-making process. The Security Council therefore needs to be expanded in both its permanent and non-permanent categories, adding new members from developing and developed countries alike.

As a result of extensive consultations with Member States, Japan, together with Brazil, Germany and India, and with the support of sponsors, submitted a draft framework resolution to the General Assembly

last week. We have listened carefully to the opinions of the Member States, both in New York and in capitals around the world, and we have also waited for the results of the African Union and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) summit meetings. Africa is a vital member of the international community and, thus, its participation is crucial for realizing Security Council reform.

In that regard, Japan welcomes Africa's resolve to pursue the enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, as declared in the recent African Union summit in Sirte. At the same time, we welcome the CARICOM summit communiqué, which indicated the inclination of a significant number of CARICOM member States to support the draft resolution.

We believe that this draft resolution is the only viable proposal capable of garnering the support of more than two thirds of the Member States. Japan appreciates the fact that many Member States have already expressed their support for the draft resolution and is determined to make further efforts towards its adoption with maximum support. Japan, together with other sponsors, has been conducting constructive dialogue with the Member States aimed at achieving the common goal of reforming the Security Council.

In view of the decisions adopted at the African Union and CARICOM summit meetings, we are ready to continue our dialogue with the African Union and CARICOM, as well as the United Nations membership at large. Japan will continue to work in a transparent and democratic manner in seeking the adoption of the draft resolution, and we strongly expect that all Member States will take part in realizing the reform of the Security Council.

With respect to the timing of the decision on the issue of Security Council reform, the Secretary-General has clearly stated in his report that "Member States should agree to take a decision on this important issue before the summit in September 2005" (*A/59/2005, para. 170*). The timing of any important decision must be carefully considered. We are not arguing for any undue haste. However, it is important to remember the following.

First, discussions on reform of the Security Council have been going on in earnest for well over a decade, since the early 1990s. Secondly, world leaders at the Millennium Summit in 2000 resolved "to intensify ... efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects" (*resolution 55/2, para. 30*), thus declaring their political intention to achieve results. Thirdly, the subsequent submission of the High-level Panel's report and the Secretary-General's report, as well as the circulation of the group of four countries' draft framework resolution in May, prompted further extensive discussion among the Member States in regional groups here in New York and in capitals around the world.

Permanent membership is not a privilege; rather, it is a duty and responsibility for nations that are willing and able to contribute effectively to international peace and security. As a peace-loving nation that is fully committed to the ideals and objectives of the Organization, Japan firmly believes that it has a significant role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the advancement of the agenda of security and development, by becoming a new permanent member of the Security Council. On that basis, we are ready to submit our aspirations to the general membership for its consideration.

The reform agenda of the United Nations is much broader than just Security Council reform. Japan attaches great importance to such issues as development, the establishment of the peacebuilding commission and the human rights council, and reform of the Secretariat and management system. We have already expressed our willingness to achieve tangible results in those areas of United Nations reform and are working closely with likeminded delegations towards that end.

At the same time, it is vital that we seize the momentum for reform. We firmly believe that a bold decision on the Security Council reform issue will not delay the reform process, but will create the further momentum needed to tackle other important reform issues during the September summit. As we have all witnessed at the current session of the General Assembly, an overwhelming majority shares a sense of urgency for reforming the Security Council. It is clear that the time for a decision on Security Council reform has arrived.

It is our sincere hope that future generations will judge favourably the crucial decision we will make to create a new United Nations for the new era. Japan will

spare no effort in working with other Member States to achieve that end.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Three weeks ago, addressing this Assembly, my delegation called for a broad debate on Security Council reform that would definitively clarify everyone's position, enable a fully transparent discussion of the various proposals before us, and identify the outlines of the desired Council reform and restore it to its true context — the overall reform of the United Nations.

For months, our debates on reform have literally been held hostage by the question of Security Council enlargement, which has overshadowed not only the broader issue of the necessary reform of that body, but also other aspects of United Nations reform, imperilling the Organization's entire restructuring process and seriously dividing the international community. Moreover, although Security Council reform is supposed primarily to address concerns about democratizing that body and making it more representative and legitimate through broader and more equitable participation in its work by all the world's regions, that reform is, unfortunately, perceived by some as merely being a way of fulfilling their ambition to serve on the Security Council on a permanent basis.

In that regard, African heads of State or Government clearly identified the framework for and the outlines of the reform of the Organization at the summit held at Sirte on 4 and 5 July 2005. In the solemn declaration they adopted they stressed that reform should be all-inclusive and should encompass all components of the United Nations system, including the General Assembly and the Security Council. In the same declaration they also emphasized the need to strengthen the leadership of the General Assembly to enable it to fully play its role as the most representative and democratic organ of the United Nations system. Lastly, the heads of State and Government reiterated their determination to ensure the success of the Ezulwini Consensus, which, I would recall, spells out Africa's position on development, collective security, conflict prevention and the conditions for the use of force, as well as the institutional reform of the United Nations.

More specifically, with regard to the reform of the Security Council and in the light of the proposals and positions that are on the negotiating table today — which have all been deemed as unsatisfactory vis-à-vis Africa's legitimate aspirations as expressed in the Ezulwini Consensus and which, moreover, could well serve to divide the continent — African leaders, who are committed to the principle of equitable geographic distribution and convinced of the advantages of rotation, authorized the submission directly to the General Assembly their own vision of an expanded Security Council that is more representative, legitimate and in keeping with new international realities. That vision was expressed in a draft resolution that was unanimously adopted by the Assembly of the African Union, which is its highest body. That draft resolution is now to be placed before the General Assembly for consideration. A ministerial follow-up mechanism comprising 15 countries was also called for by the African Union Assembly to promote Africa's position at the United Nations in a collective and united manner, as well as to ensure its aspirations as set out in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte declaration.

That African vision entails the establishment of a 26-member Security Council in which our continent will have two permanent seats having the same prerogatives and privileges as the current permanent members, including the right of veto, as well as five non-permanent seats. Asia would have two additional permanent seats and one additional non-permanent seat. Latin America and the Caribbean would have one permanent seat and one additional non-permanent seat. The Group of Western European and other States would have one additional permanent seat, with the Group of Eastern European States having one additional non-permanent seat. At the appropriate time and in a spirit of unity and solidarity, the African Union will decide upon how to allocate its seats in keeping with the Sirte declaration. Such an expanded Council would more faithfully reflect the realities of today's world, allow the Council to be more attentive to the aspirations of all Member States and remedy a historic injustice against Africa, which as of today is the only continent without a permanent seat in the Security Council.

Allow me now to clarify Africa's position with regard to the thorny issue of the veto.

Like other countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, African States have always considered the veto as an anachronistic, unfair and completely unjustified right, and have therefore demanded its outright abolition. That position was enshrined in a 1976 declaration adopted at the Mauritius summit of

the Organization of African Unity. That position has not changed, and Africa clearly reiterated its principled opposition to the right of the veto at Ezulwini.

At the same time, Africa believes that, so long as the current permanent members possess the right of the veto, it would be unfair, unreasonable and unacceptable for new permanent members to be deprived of that right. Indeed, permanent members without the right of the veto would have no way of influencing events and would not be able to alter the so-called power relationships or be able to act as effectively as they would like within the Security Council, which would continue to be completely dominated by the five current permanent members. What makes permanent membership unique is not so much the permanency of the seat as the powers that go along with it. Moreover, the current imbalance favouring a continent from which no fewer than three permanent members have the veto would simply become worse; whereas the place and role of non-permanent members would be further diminished. Lastly, what credibility would such a Council have, and what principles of equality and democracy could it invoke, if the Security Council were to be a three-tiered body with, as it were, three groupings: permanent members with the veto, permanent members without the veto and non-permanent members?

It is for that reason — and on this position we will not compromise — that we believe that the right of the veto is a key and intrinsic factor of permanent membership. Nor will we compromise on our demand for two additional non-permanent seats; we believe that it would only be fair for Africa to have a total of five non-permanent seats on the Security Council.

Our draft resolution is a fair and equitable text that meets the aspirations and concerns of the majority of Member States. It calls for the establishment of a Security Council that is more representative and legitimate by enabling all regions and continents to participate in managing world affairs, thereby ensuring their support and mobilization in favour of peace, justice and progress. It goes without saying that, as Africans, we cannot logically support any draft resolution other than our own. I would like to point out here that the position adopted by African heads of State at Sirte is the same position they agreed upon at Harare in 1997. Inevitably, it differs from proposals put forward subsequently by other groups. It is of course our wish that our draft resolution have the broadest possible support and that it serve as a catalyst for the reform process as a whole.

In the course of the coming days and weeks, we will work within the follow-up mechanism to explain and promote our vision of a renewed, expanded and more democratic Council, bearing in mind that Security Council reform is only one part of a broader process, namely, the adoption of comprehensive and complete reform of the United Nations and, above and beyond that, of international relations as a whole. Clearly, it would be ideal for Africa once again to recover its place and rank on this sixtieth anniversary of our Organization. But, if necessary, Africa will be patient and will ensure that, in any event, the reform of the Security Council will not obscure or jeopardize the overall reform of the United Nations, which it does desire.

In that connection, I would like to pay high tribute to you, Mr. President, for your constant efforts to ensure that our meeting in September will be a new starting point for our Organization.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the General Assembly.

When the Charter of the United Nations was adopted in San Francisco, President Harry Truman of the United States said to the assembled delegates,

> "You have created a great instrument for peace and security and human progress in the world.
>
> "The world must now use it.
>
> "If we fail to use it, we shall betray all those who have died in order that we might meet here in freedom and safety to create it.
>
> "If we seek to use it selfishly — for the advantage of any one nation or any small group of nations — we shall be equally guilty of that betrayal." (*Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945, vol. 1, p. 682*)

When, after a divisive war, Secretary-General Kofi Annan proposed a panel on United Nations reform, his purpose was to strengthen and unite the United Nations to address old and new threats. Unfortunately, almost from the outset, that important endeavour was hijacked by a small group of nations

seeking new and unequal privileges for themselves in an enlarged Security Council. After the establishment of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, pressure of all kinds was exerted on its members and its secretariat, other officials and Member States to secure reflection of a model for Council expansion that could selfishly secure permanent membership for that small group of nations.

During recent months, the endeavour by the so-called group of four to secure support for and endorsement of their position has taken forms that if practised in national elections would be judged to be unethical, if not worse. An outcome for Council reform achieved by such questionable means is unlikely to be sustainable or to strengthen the United Nations. We should adopt guidelines in the United Nations reform process to prevent the use of such means to twist the democratic will of free peoples and nations.

To add insult to injury, self-interest has been portrayed as altruism. The seekers of special privileges and power masquerade as the champions of the weak and the disadvantaged, asserting that the special privileges they seek will make the Council more representative and will neutralize the power of the present permanent members. History has witnessed many who have proclaimed that they came to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

On behalf of Pakistan — and I am sure I speak for all members of the Uniting for Consensus movement — let me express our regret that the group of four has formally tabled its draft resolution. That move — and the reported intention to put it to a vote — is contrary to our decisions and agreements regarding the process of our preparations for the September summit. In General Assembly resolution 59/291, we decided to achieve "the broadest possible agreement on all major issues", surely including Security Council reform. In a letter dated 16 May, the group of four, circulating its text informally, expressed the desire for "a constructive dialogue, with a view to reaching the broadest possible agreement". As a result of the positive response of the Uniting for Consensus group, it was agreed with you, Mr. President, to engage together in a constructive dialogue on the issue of Security Council reform.

The tabling of the group of four's draft resolution has several serious implications of which we should all be aware. First, Council reform, willy-nilly, will overshadow and even eclipse other aspects of United Nations reform. Second, the rules by which we have been preparing for the September summit — the painstaking effort to build consensus that the President has been leading — will now change; resolutions on various issues could now be submitted and voted upon including on other divisive issues such as human rights, management reform, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Third, a divisive vote on this issue would politicize and perhaps derail the entire preparatory process for September.

The views of Pakistan and other Uniting for Consensus members on draft resolution A/59/L.64 are no secret. We strongly oppose it for several reasons.

First, the proposed resolution is contrary to the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Most of us, when we entered the United Nations, were given no choice regarding the existing five permanent members. But today we do have a choice, and we will not choose to anoint six States with special privileges and stand ourselves as second-class Members of the Organization. Let us remember that we all entered the United Nations as sovereign and equal States. We cannot compromise the very basis of our membership in the Organization.

Second, the draft resolution is unequal. It would give permanent membership to 11 States, consigning 180 other States to competition for 14 seats.

Third, it would erode, not enhance, democracy and accountability in the Security Council. The ratio of permanent — that is, unelected — to non-permanent or elected members would increase from 1:2 to almost 1:1. Half of the Council's membership would be unaccountable. Indeed, the word "accountability" does not appear in the group of four's draft resolution.

Fourth, it would enlarge the club of the privileged, which would have a vested interest in addressing most issues in the Security Council, further depriving the General Assembly of oxygen and enhancing the domination of the Security Council.

Fifth, that draft resolution would reduce, not improve, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Security Council by requiring the constant reconciliation of the interests of 11, instead of five permanent members.

Sixth, this zero-sum proposal, with 6 winners and 180 losers, would increase divisions and tensions not only within the United Nations but within various regions, contradicting the objective of promoting peace and security.

Seventh, the group of four's complex, three-phase approach will in any case lead to a dead end. It could fail to receive a two-thirds majority at any one of the three stages, and, given the opposition to the proposal from a significant number of significant States, as well as the opposition or reservations of some of the five permanent members, it is highly unlikely that a Charter amendment based on the approach of the group of four would ever come into effect. If we follow the group into that cul-de-sac we will squander the present opportunity to realize an equitable and acceptable reform of the Security Council.

Instead of walking into the dead end of the group of four, I would like to offer instead the draft resolution circulated by the members of the group Uniting for Consensus as an approach that can accommodate the legitimate interests and concerns of all Member States, regions and subregions. Let me outline the virtues of our proposal, which is being circulated again today with my statement.

First, our proposal is equitable and fair. In proposing an increase in Council membership from 15 to 25 it does not discriminate between Member States. All will be eligible for election or re-election in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality.

Secondly, it will increase the Council's representativeness. The ratio of unelected to elected members will change from 1:2 to 1:4, instead of 1:1 under the draft resolution of the group of four. Simple arithmetic indicates that under the proposal of the Uniting for Consensus group the chances of all States, including the smaller ones, to serve on the Council will be doubled.

Thirdly, the Uniting for Consensus draft resolution will enhance accountability through the mechanism of periodic election and/or re-election. States that are elected to represent regions or groups will remain answerable to those regions or groups. If elected permanently, they will not. The draft resolution will, as a by-product, also reinforce the authority of the General Assembly — that is, of the general membership — in relation to the Security Council.

Fourthly, the Uniting for Consensus proposal is simple. It proposes direct approval of Charter amendments. It will not need to go through a complex and uncharted three-stage process. This proposal could come into effect much sooner.

Fifthly, our proposal is realistic. It can accommodate the interests and positions of all Member States, including the five permanent members, and thus is more likely to secure eventual ratification than the proposal of the group of four.

Perhaps the single greatest virtue of the Uniting for Consensus proposal is its inherent flexibility. This proposal can, through variable geometry, better accommodate the aspirations and interests of the majority of the membership as well as of regional groups such as the African group.

We understand fully the desire of Africa for greater representation as well as for equal rights with other regions. We note from the African Union's draft resolution and the accompanying documents adopted at Sirte that the AU wishes to select its own representatives, who would represent the AU and act on its behalf. If the African Union wishes to designate two countries for continuous — that is, permanent — membership on the Security Council, it could do so under the Uniting for Consensus proposal. The only difference would be that under our proposal the AU would retain the power to ensure accountability on the part of the nominated State or States through periodic election and/or re-election.

In case the African Union wants more than two countries to occupy its two permanent seats — that is, to opt for some form of periodic rotation — that would also be possible under the Uniting for Consensus proposal. Such periodic rotation could ensure, furthermore, equitable and balanced representation of all the five subregions of Africa. However, if the AU believes that the allocation of an additional seat is essential to ensure equitable representation of all its subregions, my delegation, at least — and I am sure other members of Uniting for Consensus — would be prepared to discuss this with the members of the AU.

We fully understand Africa's desire to have the same rights as those enjoyed by other regions. The African Union's desire for full rights, however, appears to be qualitatively different from the right of veto as currently held by five permanent members. As we understand it, the AU is seeking this right on behalf of

the entire African region, not as a right that is to be retained by one or two countries for themselves. The Pakistan delegation believes that ways and means can be evolved under the Uniting for Consensus proposal to provide Africa with the collective ability to uphold its interests within a reformed Security Council.

The Uniting for Consensus group welcomes the fact that the African Union at its summit decided to seek negotiations and reciprocal support from other groups. The Consensus group looks forward to continuing the dialogue with the AU that we had initiated prior to the Sirte summit with a view to restoring the prospects of accommodating each other's positions and interests in a final decision regarding Security Council reform.

Similarly, the Consensus group believes that our approach can accommodate the aspirations of other inter-regional, regional and subregional groups such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Arab League, CARICOM and the Pacific Island countries. All of them have legitimate political and regional interests to promote and defend within the Security Council. The OIC, whose 57 members constitute more than one fourth of the United Nations membership, has asked for adequate representation on the Council in proportion to its membership. The Arab League also wants adequate and continuous presence on the Council. Under the Consensus approach, the Arab countries could be assured of one seat each from Africa and Asia. The OIC could also obtain one or more additional, elected seats from the non-Arab subregions of Africa and Asia.

Under the Uniting for Consensus proposal the CARICOM and Central American States could also hope for adequate representation for their respective subregions. Similarly, the Pacific Island Forum States could seek adequate representation within Asia. It must be noted that the representation of smaller States would be significantly enhanced under the Consensus proposal, rather than the group of four proposal. They could compete for 20 elected seats under the Consensus proposal, rather than 14 under the group of four proposal.

Finally, the Consensus approach could even accommodate, at least partially, the aspirations and interests of the group of four and other aspirants for permanent memberships. As in the case of Africa, other regions could also evolve agreements for more frequent, longer-term or even continuous representation of certain countries within their respective regions. Such specific arrangements to accommodate the interests of all concerned can be reflected either in the text of the resolution or in separate annexes or protocols to be approved by the General Assembly.

If we are to achieve a result that can accommodate the interests of all major groups within the United Nations, what is required now is not a divisive and precipitate vote but a wise decision to initiate a process to achieve such an outcome. At stake is the success or failure of the September summit. At stake is whether we can achieve important decisions on development and genuine United Nations reform, or squander our political energies on a selfish and ultimately fruitless demand of a few ambitious States for unequal privileges.

What is at stake is the credibility and perhaps the survival of the United Nations. What is at stake is peace and tranquillity in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. We urge the Assembly to step back from the brink. Instead of divisive vote let us opt for a decisive dialogue. It is only through dialogue and consensus that, together, we can build a new era of friendly relations among equal and sovereign nations at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Sir, for having organized the debate on Security Council reform that has begun today. For at least two reasons, I believe that the debate has been launched at the right time.

First, our Organization has been considering the question of Council expansion for several years now. Every stone has been turned, in particular since the intensive consultations sparked last summer by the High-level Panel's report. As the Secretary-General has said, everyone knows that the time has come to conclude the exercise.

That is all the more true as we approach the final phase of preparing for the September summit. Thanks to the intense collective work done by the Assembly under your guidance, Sir, our heads of State and Government should be in a position by September to adopt measures in every field — development, security, human rights, and the structure and management of our Organization — that we hope will deeply renew the entire United Nations.

It goes without saying that Security Council reform is an important element of overall United Nations reform. We are all aware of the Security Council's primary role with respect to peace and security. That role is growing. Indeed, in considering and studying the list of crises on the Council's agenda, we see it playing that role essentially on behalf of the most fragile and vulnerable regions, countries or populations. It is therefore essential that we enhance the Council's effectiveness by ensuring that its membership better reflects the realities of today's world.

From the outset, France has maintained that, in order to achieve that aim, the Security Council must be enlarged in both categories of membership: permanent and non-permanent. Permanent membership must be extended to other Powers that can make a major contribution to international peace and security. With respect to the non-permanent membership, we also need to establish proper geographical representation, in accordance with the Charter. Finally, Africa must enjoy equitable representation, including in the permanent membership. Happily, through its regional organizations, Africa has been able to establish a fruitful partnership with the Security Council in the management of its crises.

Four countries — Brazil, Germany, India and Japan — whose individual aspirations we support, have submitted a draft resolution. The draft fully meets the various requirements to which I have referred. Moreover, as we all know, it is the result of lengthy and in-depth consultations. I would add another, clearly essential point. With respect to sensitive issues, including the right of the veto, the draft resolution includes unambiguous and therefore appropriate provisions. It was on that basis that France became a co-sponsor.

It is my hope that the draft resolution will enjoy very broad support when its principal sponsors bring it to the vote.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): I join my colleagues in thanking you sincerely, Sir, for holding this meeting on the important matter at hand.

The delicate question of reform of the Security Council has long occupied the work of all of us here at the United Nations. Indeed, my predecessor served for three years as co-Vice-Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council. The efforts at that time, unfortunately, did not prove to be sufficient.

The Open-ended Working Group has been in existence for eleven and a half years and, through detailed and time-consuming discussions that have taken place there and elsewhere, everyone knows the basic views of most other Member States on those matters. The majority of the United Nations Member States realized some time ago that, although a 100-per-cent consensus on those matters would be desirable, it simply is not reachable. The goal, therefore, is to come as close to a consensus as possible through extensive consultations and with respect for each others' views. The process should then culminate in the democratic decision-making at our disposal: a vote in this Assembly. We feel that the time for such a decision has now arrived and that the proposal in document A/59/L.64 contains the elements around which the broadest support of the Member States can be gathered.

For many years, Iceland has advocated a more representative and legitimate Council. The current composition of the Security Council mirrors neither today's geopolitical realities nor the increased membership of the United Nations. We have consistently underlined our view that reform of the Council is urgent and that the need to bring the Council into line with changes that have taken place in the past 60 years is great. We have consistently suggested an increase in permanent and non-permanent seats. In our opinion, for example, Africa must have permanent seats. Iceland actually has repeatedly stated that those changes are long overdue. We concur with the Secretary-General that it would be wise to decide on Security Council reform before the summit in September.

In the informal consultations of the General Assembly this spring, Iceland expressed some concerns that proposed models in earlier documents could make access by smaller States to the Security Council even more difficult, particularly through the reorganization of regional groups. Smaller States make up around half of the United Nations membership and their participation is an important aspect of the legitimacy of the Security Council.

The Icelandic position on the working methods of the Council is well known. The effectiveness of the

Council must not be compromised. The comprehensive reform of the Council must place emphasis on improved working methods, not only composition. Improved working methods, including more transparency, are important for all Member States, and not least the smaller ones.

We believe that the vast majority of Member States can rally around the proposed improvements in the Council's working methods as set out in subparagraphs (a) to (i) of paragraph 8 of document A/59/L.64. Implementation by the Council of that paragraph will enhance its transparency, inclusiveness and legitimacy and thus will add to the understanding of its decisions by all Member States, thereby increasing the Council's effectiveness.

The draft resolution before us today accommodates the views we have held. Iceland is therefore a sponsor of draft resolution A/59/L.64, and urges other countries to support it.

If we grasp this chance for Security Council reform, 60 years after the founding of the United Nations, the Organization will strengthen its role as the global forum for the maintenance of peace and security for the coming —and no doubt challenging — future. Let us not miss this historic opportunity.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): The Group of African States takes note of the draft resolution introduced by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan.

Past and current debates on the reform of the Security Council have clearly shown that there is a widely shared view on several important points. Among them is the fact that the Council should be enlarged and made more representative, in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, so as to reflect the realities of today's world, which has changed radically during the past 60 years. Africa acknowledges the need for the Security Council to reflect present world realities and be more responsive to the aspirations of all Member States, bearing in mind the undeniable fact that in 1945, when the United Nations was being formed, most of Africa was not represented and that, as a result, Africa today remains without permanent representation in the Security Council, which is the primary body of the United Nations on matters of international peace and security.

Conscious of the need to ensure Africa's legitimate right to fair and equitable representation within the overall process of the reform of the United Nations, and recognizing that all regions of the world must, in a spirit of solidarity, endeavour to build a world of peace, security and justice, the heads of State and Government of member States of the African Union, meeting at its fifth summit meeting, held in Libya on 4 and 5 July 2005, decided to reaffirm their strong commitment to the Ezulwini Consensus. They also adopted what is now known as the Sirte Declaration. The African common position as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration very clearly sets out the African Group's position as regards the expansion of the Security Council. It states that Africa's goal is to be fully represented in all decision-making bodies of the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council, which is the principal decision-making body.

African heads of State and Government approved a draft resolution on the reform of the Security Council during the Sirte summit. Among other things, that draft resolves to enlarge the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership and to improve its working methods. It also resolves to accord new permanent members the same prerogatives and privileges as the current permanent members, including the right of the veto. Finally, it resolves to grant Africa two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats in the Security Council, as well as to increase the Council's overall membership from 15 to 26. The African Group will introduce that draft resolution shortly.

The African Union follow-up mechanism on the reform of the United Nations mandated by the Union's Assembly of Heads of State and Government will meet imminently in New York to hold consultations with the relevant stakeholders and other actors of the membership of the United Nations to ensure the attainment of Africa's aspirations as enunciated in the Ezulwini consensus.

Mr. Savua (Fiji): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting today.

We would like to start by extending our condolences to the people and Government of the United Kingdom in connection with the death and destruction visited upon them last week, on 7 July. Our

sympathies go out primarily to the families of the dead and wounded, the families of those whose loved ones are still missing and yet to be traced and to the people of the United Kingdom as a whole.

We endorse the introduction by the Permanent Representative of Brazil of draft resolution A/59/L.64, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, which is before the General Assembly this afternoon.

Fiji is a sponsor of that draft resolution. We have taken some time to study and understand it, and we believe it has embraced everything that we have mentioned in various forums. To reiterate, Fiji believes that the key objectives of the reform of the Security Council — to review its working methods and make its membership broadly representative of the realities of the balance of power in today's world — are reflected in the text of the draft resolution. Furthermore, Fiji supports the recommendation to expand Council membership using model A, which is also the basis for the draft resolution.

Fiji also supports the efforts to move ahead with the reform through a proposal asking Member States to take serious decisions on the progress of the enlargement process. We strongly believe that it is time to undertake firm and decisive commitments and to allow the process to make momentous leaps to ensure that some tangible outcomes are arrived at during the summit to be held in September. For we agree with the Secretary-General when he says that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without the reform of the Security Council. The draft resolution is a document that advances that idea.

Our support for draft resolution A/59/L.64 is also based on our confidence that the outcome will enhance the democratic and accountable nature of the Council and bring into its decision-making process countries more representative of the broader membership, especially from the developing world. It further recognizes the value and degree of their contributions to the United Nations system in general, peace and security, and the significant role they have played in the development of those of us less fortunate than others.

The reform of the Security Council has been discussed continuously for well over a decade and debated substantially in the past few years. To further delay the process would not only stagnate the approval of other important issues, but would also send the wrong message to the world that we who are Members of the United Nations prefer at this moment to wait rather than to seize the day. We ask the General Assembly to favourably consider adopting the draft resolution.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The United Nations plays an indispensable role in international affairs.

China has always supported the further strengthening of the United Nations through reform and is ready to join others in actively cooperating with the President of the General Assembly and the facilitators to strive for positive results in the overall reform of the United Nations and to ensure the success of the September summit.

China supports the necessary and rational reform of the Security Council with a view to enhancing its capacity to respond to global threats and challenges. Our position has been explicit and consistent. We believe, first, that the reform of the Security Council should be multifaceted, including both the enlargement of the membership and the improvement of working methods. At the same time, the Council's authority and efficiency must also be ensured.

Secondly, the enlargement of the Security Council must give priority to increasing the representation and voice of the developing countries. The developing countries constitute over two thirds of the membership of the United Nations, but they are seriously underrepresented on the Security Council. China firmly supports the increase of the representation of African countries on the Council. That position is unswerving.

Thirdly, any enlargement formula must ensure that small and medium-sized countries have more opportunities to serve as members of the Security Council and to participate in its decision-making.

Fourthly, the enlargement of the Security Council must uphold the principle of geographical balance and reflect the representation of different cultures and civilizations. Reform formulas that have implications for particular regions should first achieve consensus within relevant regional groups.

It has been the consistent view of China that the reform of the Security Council should be realized

through a gradual process of democratic discussion aimed at achieving consensus. Through the United Nations Charter, the entire membership of the United Nations solemnly confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and authorizes the Council to act on its behalf in fulfilling that responsibility. The reform of the Security Council is extremely sensitive and complex because it is crucial not only to international peace and security, but also to the immediate interests of all States Members of the United Nations. Therefore, a decision on the reform of the Security Council should be made by all Members of the United Nations and be based on the will of the vast majority of the membership. It should not just address the concerns of a few States or a part of the membership. Only decisions achieved through the widest possible consensus can enjoy universal trust and support and serve the common and long-term interests of all the States Members of the United Nations.

At present, after more than half a year's repeated discussions, differences surrounding the enlargement formula of the Security Council seem to be widening rather than narrowing. The group of four, the Uniting for Consensus group, the African Union and the United States all put forward their own draft resolutions or ideas, and we cannot exclude the possible emergence of other new formulas later on. That fully demonstrates the complexity of the question of Security Council enlargement. It is fair to say that we are still far from finding a formula that can accommodate the concerns of all sides or win widespread support.

In such circumstances, Member States need more time to continue dialogue and to carry out full consultations in search of a compromise. Most Member States do not want to be forced to vote on a formula on which there is no broad consensus. Forcing through an immature formula by means of a vote is bound to split Member States and regional groups and thus weaken the authority and role of the United Nations. To do so would also totally defeat the original purpose of Security Council reform.

Based on the aforementioned considerations, China is firmly opposed to setting an artificial time frame for Security Council reform and rejects a forced vote on any formula on which there still exist significant differences.

The entire membership of the United Nations places high hopes in the September summit and looks forward to positive results in the overall reform of the United Nations so that the Organization can maintain its vitality and renew its glory. Security Council reform is an important part of the overall reform of the United Nations. However, reforms in other fields are equally important and the enlargement of the Security Council should not distract from consultations on other important reform proposals. For several months now, the preparation for the summit has been almost hijacked by the debate surrounding the enlargement of the Security Council, which has seriously diluted the attention and input given to such other major issues as development, security, human rights and the reform of the Secretariat. On the question of the enlargement of the Security Council, any hasty action in disregard of the interests of all sides will create serious division among Member States and may result in a final outcome of the September summit that is not up to our expectations. That is undoubtedly a situation none of us would wish to see and that we must try our utmost to avoid.

China is convinced that Member States still have the time and opportunity to achieve a broad consensus on the enlargement of the Security Council. The key lies in the genuine political will and the spirit of compromise of all sides. The unity and consensus of Member States are the most valuable assets of the United Nations. It was on that basis that the United Nations rose from the ravages of the Second World War. Moreover, it is on that basis that we shall respond in the new century to the new security threats and challenges and achieve common development and prosperity. We must not arbitrarily negate the possibility of achieving consensus on the enlargement of the Security Council without having yet made any substantive endeavours. China appeals to and urges all Member States to proceed from the consideration of maintaining the unity and long-term interests of the United Nations and to make every effort to avoid an unfortunate situation in which a showdown on Security Council enlargement is forced upon Member States while conditions are not yet ripe.

Mr. Towpik (Poland): I am taking the floor today as a representative of a country whose authorities and public opinion remain strongly convinced that the reform of the United Nations is both timely and necessary.

As we have already stated on many occasions, the United Nations system must adapt itself to the current international environment in order adequately to respond to the threats and challenges facing us today.

In presenting our idea of the new political act for the United Nations, we underlined the fact that any changes made to the United Nations system should be of both a conceptual and institutional nature. With respect to the first category, we have already made progress by adopting the Millennium Declaration. Further necessary steps in that regard will, it is hoped, be taken during the September summit.

However, as underlined by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "In larger freedom", we do not have to wait for the summit to conclude all institutional reforms. Some of them can and should be undertaken before September. That is especially true with regard to reform of the main organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security, namely the Security Council.

We all agree that what we need is a stronger and more efficient Security Council — a Council which is able to take decisions and has the authority to ensure that they are fully implemented. That is why, in our opinion, reform of the Security Council should mean, inter alia, enlargement in both categories of its membership. By choosing the option of six new permanent seats in the Council, we are following through with our declared support for the aspirations of those countries that make important contributions to the United Nations system.

We believe also that an increased number of permanent members should reflect the broader membership of the United Nations as a whole. That is why we have repeatedly pointed out that Africa and Latin America should have representation in the permanent membership of the Council. Enlargement in the non-permanent category, which should include one additional seat for the Eastern European regional Group — whose membership has doubled over the past 15 years — should ensure an appropriate regional balance in the Council.

Our conviction that it is only through bold decisions, taken at the right time, that we can adapt this Organization to political realities has led us to sponsor the draft resolution submitted at the beginning of this debate by the representative of Brazil. That draft resolution is intended to resolve, in the best possible way, this complex and difficult problem which for more than a decade now has been deliberated within the United Nations. In our opinion, this solution is careful to take into consideration the interests of all the regional groups as well as many different viewpoints. The proposed language concerning the veto power has already found broad acceptance.

Finally, the proposal to hold, after 15 years, a review of the accepted solution would ensure that we would not be creating a kind of permanent solution but that we would be able to envisage possible changes and adaptations in future.

By proceeding with the process of, and deciding on, Security Council enlargement, we will send a clear signal that we will spare no effort in finalizing a comprehensive reform of the whole United Nations system. The adoption of the draft resolution would indeed have some important positive results, first of all symbolic, as it would show that the Member States are truly determined to undertake a real reform of the United Nations system. The adoption of that draft resolution would also have a practical result: a more representative Council would adopt more legitimate, forceful and effectively implemented decisions.

We cannot agree with those who argue that an expansion would slow down the process of decision-making and reduce the efficiency of the Council. In Europe, for more than 10 years, we have witnessed a number of enlargements of institutions and organizations, and those structural changes did not affect their capacity to act. On the contrary, those bodies continue to fulfil their goals and mandates by adapting themselves to new political and economic realities. The effectiveness of intergovernmental institutions does not lie in the number of their members; it lies in the political will of States.

Poland believes that this Organization is not lacking in political will. We believe that Member States will not allow critics of the United Nations to point to this debate as yet another example of simple discussions without any conclusions. The time has come to take a resolute decision reflecting the realities of our times, our needs and our hopes.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's debate. For some time now, the Organization has been looking forward to holding a debate such as this.

First of all, it is important for us to underline the fact that the proposal submitted by the group of four is not the only proposal concerning the enlargement of the Security Council. There are other proposals, as we have heard today. One of those proposals, submitted by Uniting for Consensus and supported by Argentina, and which was circulated to all Member States on Friday last, was clearly and comprehensively explained by the representative of Pakistan at today's meeting, which is why I shall not refer to it.

In that context, we cannot deny, however, that we have felt a certain amount of pressure to discuss a draft text which has not met with any consensus, which sidelines major actors in our Organization and which would result in divisions within, and a weakening of, our Organization.

The United Nations was created as a democratic system — as a multilateral parliament and a forum for debate in which all options can be considered on an equal footing. To tell the truth, the negotiation process on reform of the Security Council has not yet been formally finalized, as consensus has not yet been reached. It is true that we have been discussing the issue for a number of years now in various working groups. However, we have as yet been unable to attain the necessary consensus, and that is why it is crucial for us to avoid bringing any pressure to bear and to avoid rushing into a vote that, I repeat, would divide Member States.

The importance of the matter at hand makes it necessary, we believe, for the General Assembly to work together to cooperate in order to achieve effective and legitimate results, given that the decisions of the Security Council, as the Assembly is aware, are binding on the entire international community. Argentina strongly hopes that reform of the Security Council will take place and that discussions on all other reform-related agenda items will be brought to a successful conclusion, so that the lasting results achieved can enhance the work of the Organization, 60 years after its creation.

Since the establishment of the Organization in 1945, Argentina has held the view that there should not be different categories of membership, and we continue to maintain the same position of principle. We know that in 1945 the international community accepted that discrimination for reasons of historical necessity that have nothing to do with today's world. It is unjust to address that unfair situation by adding even more unfairness and increasing inequality. It does not seem correct or reasonable to try to cure an illness by adding to what caused it.

In our opinion, the proposal of the group of four contained in document A/59/L.64 would create discrimination and artificial hegemonies among regions. Obviously, that would not only be harmful to the work of the Security Council, but also jeopardize international peace and security by creating dangerous inequalities in some regions with very sensitive political realities. Moreover, it would give disproportionate weight to some regional groups that already have it, by creating a Security Council with an excessive number of permanent members. That would perpetuate an attitude that runs counter to the legal equality of States and endangers the attainment of the objectives of the Charter.

We are all aware that, in the history of the Organization, the Security Council has failed many times to impose peace. That has been due fundamentally to conflicts among its permanent members. Neither the concept of permanent membership nor the veto has been a useful tool for ensuring international peace and security. How can we think that with six new permanent members the Council will be more effective and responsible in carrying out its functions? We believe that the most effective way to bring that about is to increase the number of non-permanent members, leaving more room for the developing world and for small and medium-sized States.

It would be very dangerous for the future of the United Nations if we were now obliged to vote on a draft resolution that has neither universal acceptance nor the support of all the permanent members. In our view, the idea of mobilizing everyone to vote on an amendment that might not enter into force is also dangerous. We must ask ourselves a question: must we pay the price of lack of progress on reform because of the stubbornness of some States that want to gain prestige by becoming permanent members? Should we not try to reach a fair and reasonable solution through democratic consultation and a cautious and responsible attitude?

In that context, we believe that the proposal of the Uniting for Consensus group avoids those dangers and promotes a flexible, regionally fair and responsible

approach. It is aimed at strengthening the legitimacy of the Security Council, and hence of the United Nations, because it promotes greater openness, democratization, transparency and responsibility on the part of States members of the Council. That would not be achieved with new permanent members, whose joining the Council would prevent greater access for small and medium-sized countries — in particular, I repeat, those of the developing world — in the work of maintaining international peace and security.

We therefore urge the sponsors of document A/59/L.64 not to lead us to a divisive vote that would weaken the Organization even more. We ask all members to support our proposal. We also request you, Mr. President, to continue the consultations so that we can achieve the consensus that the Organization deserves after 60 years.

Mrs. Londoño (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for giving us this additional opportunity to expand the debate on Security Council reform. We believe that an open, broad debate aimed at reaching consensus is the best way to make progress on the reform we are currently discussing. We also believe that we should not set ourselves a time limit for reaching agreement on Security Council reform.

Colombia's position is based on principles and considerations that are well known to everyone and that go back to the time when we discussed the creation of the Organization. Colombia has always expressed its opposition to the veto, and we voted against it in San Francisco, because we believed that it would introduce an anti-democratic element into the decision-making process and that it did not reflect the principle of the sovereign equality of States. We still hold that conviction today; that is why we do not believe it appropriate to extend the veto when considering the expansion of the Security Council. Consequently, we support the necessary expansion of the Council through the inclusion of new members in the non-permanent category.

It is also important to review the Council's working methods to make them more transparent and to ensure better communication with other United Nations Member States. Likewise, accountability must be improved. In that connection, we believe it necessary to promote a more fluid dialogue with the General Assembly, the only universal organ of the Organization.

Those elements — democratization, widening the membership and working methods — are at the heart of our debate. Various groups of countries have prepared documents and draft resolutions that present their own perspectives. They have all enriched the debate on reform and are therefore welcome.

The document on the "cascade effect" (A/59/856, annex), submitted by Costa Rica, calls attention to the representation of the five permanent members throughout the United Nations system. That could mean a situation in which not five, but 11 countries would cause such a cascade effect.

Bearing those objectives in mind, we have worked not only to achieve consensus, but to formulate specific proposals that would make it possible to develop expansion formulas based on the principle of sovereign equality; formulas that unite rather than divide us; formulas that enable us to practice democratic multilateralism with a broad, flexible and comprehensive vision.

The proposal that we have submitted with Uniting for Consensus would permit Security Council expansion and would improve opportunities for all Members of the Organization to serve in the Council. It would provide for simple reform that would allow everyone's interests to be reflected in one way or another.

What is important now is to maintain unity and to think about the United Nations with a long-term vision, seeking its efficiency and effectiveness.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): In two months' time, our heads of State or Government are convening for what might well be the most important United Nations meeting for a long time. We must agree on comprehensive, bold and action-oriented reforms to strengthen the United Nations and adapt it to the world of today.

Last week's despicable attacks in London were the most horrendous reminder of the urgency of finding global solutions to global threats. We need concrete reform decisions, with timetables as appropriate, in all the four areas under discussion: development, security, human rights and institutional reform. If we can achieve that, the September summit will be a success.

Attaining a reformed Security Council is one of the most daunting tasks, and also one of the most important. The composition, size and working methods of the Council need to reflect today's realities in order to be perceived as relevant and legitimate. Therefore, a decision is urgent and should be taken before the summit in September. Non-action is not an option.

Since the Charter was adopted 60 years ago, a number of countries, including in Africa, Asia and Latin America, have emerged as key political and economic Powers. Those countries should be given a role in the work of the Council reflecting their importance and contributions to the United Nations. We welcome the fact that African States are forthcoming in expressing their aspirations.

A reform of the Security Council needs the broadest possible support to be considered legitimate. This debate should help us in our efforts to secure such broad support.

Sweden notes the various draft resolutions presented to us. We sympathize with the aspirations of the group of four to expand their representation on the Council. We have some concerns regarding two aspects of their draft, as we want to see a Security Council that is more legitimate, effective and accountable.

First, we fully support the recommendation of the Secretary-General not to expand the veto power. Our preference is to limit the use of veto and to promote a veto-free culture. Introducing new veto rights, even if circumscribed as in the current group of four draft, would in our view not be a step in the right direction.

Secondly, we welcome a review clause, but would like to see it further strengthened and made periodic. Such review could take into account criteria relevant to the obligations of Council members to contribute to international peace and security. Fulfilling those criteria would add legitimacy for continued permanent status. Thus, we would prefer to see an explicit mechanism that would make it possible for other Member States to review the performance of the new permanent members and, with the support of a two-thirds majority, replace them if they fail in their responsibilities. It should not be easy to replace a new permanent member, but it should be possible without going through the full procedure of changing the Charter.

A reform of the Security Council with the broadest possible support among Member States is necessary. We should have a Council that is representative, legitimate and accountable.

Mr. Sareva (Finland): The major event this September will provide us with a unique opportunity to take decisive steps towards implementing the Millennium Declaration and meeting the Millennium Development Goals, while at the same time ensuring a safer and more secure world. It is of the utmost importance that all countries assume the responsibility to implement the commitments made at the Millennium summit.

The coming summit will also present us with an historic opportunity to modernize and adapt the United Nations to the challenges of the new century. The momentum for institutional reform that now exists must not be lost. While we stress the importance of the revitalization of the General Assembly and the need to re-establish its political stature, and call for a stronger role for the Economic and Social Council, we also support the reform and enlargement of the Security Council.

In Finland's view, any reform of the Council must aim at increasing both its legitimacy and its effectiveness. A Council that is truly effective in carrying out its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security should also be seen as more legitimate by the wider membership of the Organization. At the same time, a more representative and thereby more legitimate Council will, over the longer run, be more effective in carrying out its functions.

Finland therefore supports an enlargement of the Council in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members. However, for the Council to be both effective and legitimate, the right of veto should not be extended to the new permanent members under any circumstance. Finland also strongly supports reform of the Council's working methods so as to make them more transparent, inclusive and legitimate.

Finland agrees with the Secretary-General's view that we should agree to take a decision on that important issue before the summit in September. We also agree that, even if it would be preferable for action to be taken by consensus, that must not become an excuse for postponing action.

To conclude, Finland supports the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.64 and will vote in favour of it when it comes up for a vote. Furthermore, I should add that we have previously and on a number of occasions expressed our support for the aspirations of Japan and Germany to be elected permanent members of an enlarged Council.

Mr. Filippi Balestra (San Marino): With reference to the dramatic and barbaric terrorist act perpetrated in London, I would like, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of San Marino, to reiterate our strong condemnation of any act of terrorism and to express our sentiments of deepest condolence to the Government of the United Kingdom and the families of the victims.

I wish to thank you, Sir, for organizing this meeting to discuss the draft resolution introduced by the group of four and all other proposals relating to the enlargement of the Security Council. I will try to be very pragmatic and underline just a few points, because everything — and even too much — has already been said on that issue.

San Marino deems that a vote at a difficult and delicate time for the United Nations would be extremely divisive, create fractures among countries, lower credibility and, above all, weaken the Organization.

Draft resolution A/59/L.64, besides presenting essential factors that the Government of San Marino does not agree with, opens the way to several cascade effects that none of us is able to estimate and that could limit the participation of small and medium-sized countries in several organs of the United Nations.

Moreover, it entails some procedural problems. For example, according to the draft resolution, the General Assembly shall proceed no later than 12 weeks after its approval to a vote to elect the new permanent members of the Security Council. Since the draft resolution is a recommendation to Member States and becomes effective only after ratification by two thirds of the membership, the enlarged Security Council would not exist yet. How can we designate and elect new members of an organ that does not yet exist? Legal principles and common sense require us to proceed to a vote only after the effective establishment of the enlarged Council.

The group of four has failed to give the international community the evidence that the Security Council, as they foresee it, will be as or more efficient. Experience teaches us that a number increase decreases efficiency. In fact, how can we imagine a more efficient Council with more than double the number of countries that can exercise the right of veto? The Security Council cannot afford to give up its efficiency and efficacy, because it is the only United Nations organ that must act urgently and immediately and that was created for that purpose.

In addition, the draft resolution of the group of four does not focus enough on improving the methods of work of the Security Council, which we believe represents one of the priorities of the reform. In this regard, I would like to express support for the paper presented by Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

San Marino, however, agrees with the principle contained in the proposal circulated by the Uniting for Consensus group. We believe that that proposal shows a much more flexible approach. The General Assembly would maintain the right to elect the non-permanent members. The draft resolution would ensure the frequent rotation of small and medium-sized countries. It would enhance accountability, increase the representation of developing countries and allow countries to be re-elected and therefore to make their presence felt more strongly in this Organization.

The world expects to see our Organization united, efficient and productive, because the challenges of our time require that. We therefore believe that it is more proper to take the time to reach the broadest possible agreement, instead of pushing a draft resolution that would surely convey an image of a divided Organization run in the interests of a small elite.

Mr. Šerkšnys (Lithuania): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting of the General Assembly.

A lot has been said about the reform of the Security Council since the release of the report of the High-level Panel last December. Indeed, a lot has been said over the past 10 years or so, the Razali paper being just one case in point. In other words, we have had more than ample time to talk. The time has now come to move from words to deeds, even if the desired consensus is missing.

It is time to act, because failing to act now will only perpetuate the status quo, denying hopes for more equitable representation for a large part of the world, especially the developing world. Failing to act now will leave us fatigued by an oft-promised but not implemented reform. We do not want such fatigue to spread to other areas of the United Nations reform process, depriving us of impetus, of instruments and of the means necessary to adequately respond to new global concerns and challenges, and disappointing millions of people throughout the world, for many of whom the United Nations continues to be the main hope for a semblance of human existence. Let us complete this first step in the overall reform process and focus on what we can achieve at the September summit.

Lithuania has chosen to co-sponsor the draft resolution of the group of four with a view to making the Security Council more transparent and democratic in its working methods and more representative in terms of present and future global realities.

We are not saying that the draft is perfect. But for us, it is the only viable draft on the table, one enabling the composition of the Security Council to reflect the actual growth in the United Nations membership over the years and giving the Council added legitimacy by increasing the number of both permanent and non-permanent members.

In fact, the draft offers improvements to all regions, including the regional group comprising the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, which has seen its membership almost double over the past decade or so and which has witnessed some of the most dramatic and impressive political and economic transformations in recent years.

Most importantly, the draft offers a decent chance to improve the representation of developing countries on the Security Council, including by adding new permanent seats. We believe that the developing world of Africa, Asia and Latin America should be eligible for permanent seats. We do not quite see how perpetuating a reality dating back to 1945 by keeping the number of permanent seats unchanged can improve the Council's ability to respond more effectively to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Permanent membership is a privilege. But, first and foremost, it confers a great responsibility to contribute significantly and systematically to international peace and security. We have therefore consistently welcomed the proposals to give an opportunity to countries that have the resources, the capacity and the will to make a particularly meaningful contribution to the work of the Security Council to participate in its decision-making on a continuous and permanent basis.

Notably, by introducing a review clause, the draft resolution provides for the real possibility of further adjusting and adapting the Security Council to constantly changing international realities, making sure that the new permanent members make good on their word. The review clause would enable us all, collectively, to weigh the actions and contributions of Council members objectively and honestly against our collective expectations for better security and for peace and to address their delivery with regard to these expectations.

Ideally, we would like to see the widest possible agreement on Security Council reform, including the expansion of its membership. But we live in the real world. Let us therefore be realistic and not make the absence of consensus an excuse for inaction.

We could go on arguing about the issue for many years to come, denying the right of Security Council membership to regions that have the most to gain or to lose from the results of the Council's work. But it is not just the developing world of Africa, Asia and Latin America that will lose if we fail to adjust the Council to counter the multiple challenges ahead of us. It will be a loss for us all, because, as we have repeated multiple times in this Assembly Hall, there is no development without security, and no security without development. Because of that inextricable linkage, we will all win or all lose.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to join other speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for having provided this opportunity to discuss the reform of the Security Council today.

My country has had the opportunity, on a number of occasions during informal discussions in the course of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, to state its position on the issue of Security Council reform. That position is summarized in the text that has been distributed.

Today we have before us a draft resolution that proposes a model and a specific methodology for

Council reform. It is the result of many months of work by its authors to make the proposal known and to take into account the suggestions and views of Member States.

While acknowledging those efforts, Switzerland considers that three important questions should be dealt with more clearly.

First, Switzerland is opposed to granting the right of veto to new permanent members. We joined the United Nations two and a half years ago, following a referendum of the Swiss people that sent a clear and undisputed message from all of the political forces that our people distrusted and were opposed to all privileges, in particular the right of veto. In adapting the Security Council to the new international realities, we must avoid strengthening its anachronistic aspects. The draft resolution introduces welcome restrictions, but it still contains ambiguities, which should be removed.

Secondly, with regard to the review clause in paragraph 7 of the draft resolution, Switzerland supports the proposal that has just been put forward by the representative of Sweden aimed at facilitating a genuine periodic review of the composition of the Security Council by Member States.

The decision to add new permanent members to the Security Council would be easier if the Member States had the ability to periodically express their views on its composition. If necessary, by means of a vote representing a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly, they should have the possibility to replace newly elected permanent members whose contribution to the achievement of the Organization's objectives were no longer seen to be in keeping with the expectations of the large majority of Member States. That adjustment, which may appear to be somewhat theoretical, is important to the extent that it tones down the idea of permanency, a notion that causes considerable problems for a significant number of States.

We note with interest the explanations made by the Permanent Representative of Brazil at the opening of this meeting to the effect that the review should take into consideration the effectiveness and composition of the Council. We hope that this will be reflected in the text of the draft resolution.

As far as the working methods of the Security Council are concerned, all Member States have had the opportunity to examine the proposals that Switzerland submitted in a document distributed to all missions on 27 April 2005. The draft resolution before us today partly takes into consideration the recommendations that Switzerland feels particularly strongly about. However, it does not address three concerns that we also consider to be of particular importance.

First, it should no longer be possible for the current permanent members to exercise their right of veto when the Council is called upon to act on cases of genocide, large-scale massacres, ethnic cleansing, or other grave breaches of international humanitarian law. That proposal, which was warmly received during our informal debates since January, should have no trouble being accepted and finding a consensus.

Secondly, the Security Council should abstain in every possible way from exercising a legislative role. It should define the urgent and exceptional situations in which it can be compelled to do so, and ensure that in such cases the points of view of all Member States are heard and taken into consideration in the decision-making process.

Thirdly, when sanctions regimes adopted by the Security Council include lists of individuals or entities, the sanctions committees should establish precise procedures to allow for reviews to be conducted regarding those individuals or entities which claim to be placed or kept wrongly on such lists. As the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change has emphasized, it is necessary to ensure compliance with human rights norms and conventions. Switzerland suggests including those proposals in paragraph 8 of the text because it is convinced that they will increase the number of countries that could support the draft resolution and would at least partially respond to the call on the Assembly made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Jordan for further specifics on the Council's working methods.

The reform of the Security Council is necessary and a decision on that subject is a serious and important measure. The General Assembly must act, and it can do so with determination. An additional effort is nevertheless needed to ensure that the actual reform of the Security Council fully contributes to the collective action that we are taking together to improve the Organization within the current reform process. For

many months, the reform of the Security Council has been discussed on the basis of principles, criteria and positions whose validity is largely recognized: equality of States, the principle of differentiated responsibility depending on the capacity to act, the balance of power through the acknowledgement of new Powers, as well as stability, continuity and flexibility. Beyond those principles, it is necessary to find ways and means to allow for compromise on concrete issues, including the notion of permanency, the right of veto and the working methods, in order to enlarge the group of countries that can support the proposed enlargement with conviction.

Mr. Sopoaga (Tuvalu): Tuvalu is honoured to speak and contribute to the debate on agenda item 53 of the General Assembly. My delegation wishes to thank you, Sir, for convening this very important debate.

The question before this debate, in our view, is not so much about how, but about when this body, the General Assembly, can take up decisions that are urgently needed to make the United Nations more reflective of the realities of the twenty-first century, more capable of addressing those challenges, and more legitimate and meaningful to all regions and countries, including the smallest and most isolated.

Tuvalu believes that the time is ripe for us to decide on a more equitable and representative Security Council. We believe that the rationale, justification and modalities for the expansion of the Security Council have all been well reflected and consulted upon by all Members since their introduction in the Secretary-General's report and other relevant United Nations reports. In our view, unless the question is resolved now, it will become the fork in the road in our ongoing efforts to achieve more comprehensive reforms in the United Nations, particularly to enhance development, security and human rights for all.

Tuvalu supports and has agreed to co-sponsor draft resolution A/59/L.64, introduced by the Permanent Representative of Brazil, in the conviction that it is fair and balanced and advances what are basically the recommendations of relevant United Nations reports and the views expressed during extensive debates, dialogues and consultations. More importantly, it also provides for a more representative Council that is effective in discharging its primary responsibility for addressing the security concerns of all countries, and particularly those of smaller States.

For instance, and as the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom" reminds us in a timely manner, our security in Tuvalu also relates to and is already threatened by the adverse impacts of environmental degradation, in particular of climate change and sea-level rise. As asserted by the Secretary-General, without action, small island developing States like Tuvalu will pay a bitter price for the actions of others.

We believe that the draft resolution before us will allow for a framework not only for an expanded Security Council, but also for one that will be more responsive and responsible to the security concerns of all nations — a Council that will also take account of and include environmental security on its agenda.

Again, Tuvalu wishes to express its strong support for the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.64 and appeals to other United Nations Members to support it.

Mrs. Silkalna (Latvia): Thank you, Sir, for convening this timely debate. Allow me to add some brief remarks in support of the draft resolution before us.

Latvia is a sponsor of the draft resolution in the belief that it opens the way to a workable and balanced model for Security Council reform. We strongly support the creation of new permanent seats. The Council needs to be better equipped with diplomatic, financial and, if necessary, military means to address the evolving security challenges that we all face. We believe that the continuity and stability provided by permanent seats can only enhance the overall effectiveness of the Security Council.

Latvia notes that the draft resolution offers greater opportunities for all the regional groups to share in the work of the Security Council. We particularly welcome the creation of an additional non-permanent seat for the group of Eastern European States, which has grown considerably in recent years. As a region where numerous States have recently achieved peaceful transition from totalitarian rule to democracy, we can make a constructive contribution to the work of the Security Council.

We also welcome the inclusion of a review process in the draft resolution and the shelving of the

question of the veto. As to concerns that a Security Council of 25 would be too large, we consider that the proposed size better reflects the current size of the United Nations membership. A Security Council of 25 members need not be less efficient than the current one, provided that the working methods of the Council are revised. On that point, we support the efforts led by Switzerland.

The General Assembly has spent many years pondering reform of the Security Council without achieving consensus. We must use the current momentum to make progress on a workable model. Adoption of the draft resolution now will also allow us to redirect our full attention to the many other important and pressing issues on the United Nations reform agenda.

Let us make use of this rare window of opportunity. Let us move ahead and adapt the Security Council to better meet the realities faced by our generation.

Mr. Penjo (Bhutan): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this important meeting.

Bhutan has co-sponsored draft resolution A/59/L.64, as we believe that it presents the General Assembly with concrete proposals to reform the Security Council. It is now time for the General Assembly to take decisive action in that regard. My delegation is convinced that the proposals contained in the draft resolution meet the desire of the membership to make the Security Council more effective and reflective of the current world situation.

It proposes to enlarge the Council's membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories so that it is large enough — but not too unwieldy — to be representative of the 191 Member nations. It seeks to achieve a fair and equitable balance in the permanent category by increasing the Council's numbers, making it possible for countries from all regions and of all different development levels to be represented therein. It also seeks to expand the non-permanent seats so that all countries, big and small, have a greater opportunity to serve on the Council. Moreover, it proposes a clear time frame to review the effectiveness of the reformed Council, including the issue of exercise of the veto by the new permanent members. Above all, the proposals on the working methods of the Council are the most comprehensive so far and provide scope for small countries like mine to be more closely involved in the work of the Security Council.

The past few months have witnessed a new momentum in our discussions on Security Council reform. The draft resolution before us is the product of intensive and broad consultations over the past months. It provides the most timely opportunity to bring to fruition our discussions over a decade to achieve a more representative, transparent and effective Security Council.

In September, our leaders will gather at the United Nations to provide a new direction to the Organization and the multilateral system. The proposals in document A/59/L.64 will contribute to that new direction and to the success of the September summit. My delegation is hopeful that all Member States will seize this momentous opportunity and support the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.112

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

112nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 12 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Draft resolution (A/59/L.64)

Mr. Rock (Canada): Canada welcomes this opportunity to express its views about proposed changes in the membership and working methods of the Security Council. These issues arise as we are discussing a wide range of proposals that leaders will take up when they meet here in September. Let me say at the outset that, while Canada regards Security Council enlargement as a worthy objective, we urge Member States not to allow this single issue to distract us unduly from the many other crucial subjects with which we want leaders to deal decisively in September. Those subjects include concrete measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; practical steps to protect the safety and security of our citizens, wherever they may live; renewed efforts to achieve recognition and enforcement of human rights; and proposals to render the management of the United Nations more effective, more transparent and more accountable.

I speak frankly in saying that that bundle of bold and broad proposals is more urgent than changes in the composition of the Security Council. We therefore urge colleagues, as we debate and decide the pending draft resolution, not to lose sight of the world's true priorities, which are found on that pressing agenda that our citizens are counting on us to address and to deliver on in September.

(*spoke in French*)

Having said that, let me turn to the matter under discussion today. Canada agrees that the Security Council should be expanded. We agree that various regions of the world should be more fairly represented on the Council; that there should be more frequent and enhanced participation by medium-sized and small States; and that the duration of mandates should be examined and the possibility of consecutive re-election should be considered. We also agree that the Council's working methods should be modernized to make them more transparent, more inclusive and more responsive.

(*spoke in English*)

But there is one feature of the draft resolution before us with which Canada cannot agree: we are steadfastly opposed to the addition of new permanent members to the Security Council. My comments must not be taken to mean that I am questioning the worthiness of the nations that seek those permanent seats or the sincerity and good faith of their efforts and those of the other sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.64. Each of the aspirants has demonstrated a real and profound commitment to this institution, and each has served with great distinction in the Assembly and, indeed, as an elected member of the Security Council. And Canada is proud to call each of them a

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friend. However, I speak in support of principles that Canada believes in strongly — principles that we believe must govern the way in which we renew and improve the Security Council and its method of working.

The permanent members of the Council took their seats in a distant and very different age. The forces that shaped the post-war creation of the United Nations were unique to that time. Circumstances have changed. Regional balances have shifted. The world's needs and challenges have evolved. Whatever the merits of the formula devised in 1945 may have been at that time, the vast differences in today's reality must be reflected in the approach we take to Security Council reform today.

I am speaking not only about shifts in population and relative power. I am referring also to the emergence of values that are now fostered and cherished here and throughout the world: values such as democracy, accountability, flexibility and fairness — values that do not favour a widened notion of two-tiered privileges in the world's only institution of global reach and universal membership. In that context, the Council of 1945 must be seen as an anomaly to be accommodated, not as a model to be emulated.

Canada believes, as a matter of principle, that the accession of additional permanent members to the Security Council would not be in the best interests of this institution or in the long-term best interests of the overwhelming majority of its Member States. It would betray the values that Member States have developed over time. It would deny a fair and flexible allocation of seats. It would diminish the accountability of the Council at a time when that virtue is most needed. It would deprive the world's regions of a democratic and orderly way to determine for themselves their representation in this institution's most significant body.

Speaking of democracy, supporters of the draft resolution have suggested in the debate that the process that they propose is democratic. I know of no democracy in which a single election is sufficient to entitle the winner to remain in office in perpetuity. Indeed, had that option been available in Canada, I would not be here today.

The situation is scarcely improved by including a provision that foresees an illusionary and meaningless review in the very distant future. Additionally, the formula proposed in the pending draft resolution would eliminate the possibility that a Member State could truly represent the interests of its region on the Council. The addition of permanent members would also have significant and adverse indirect consequences through what is known as the cascade effect.

Since permanent members of the Council expect, as a right, to enjoy dedicated seats on a wide variety of subsidiary and related bodies, adding new permanent members would reduce opportunities for the rest of the Member States to serve on those bodies. Perhaps most important, from the point of view of the interests of this institution, the designation of some of our Member States as additional permanent members would lock into place forevermore a rigid regime unsuited to a dynamic world. Who can say what our circumstances will require in 20 years, or in 40, or in 60 more? We have seen, and we have lived with, the limitations inherent in a freeze-frame format that favours a fixed over a fluid formula. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Canada favours an approach to Council enlargement that would reflect the values that we all seek to promote. On Friday last, Italy circulated a draft resolution on behalf of a group of Member States, including Canada, that have united in support of a broadly based consensus. That proposal, instead of increasing the number of permanent members, would add seats that would be permanently allocated to regions, while leaving the Member States in those regions to decide, from time to time, which of their number was best suited to serve, and for how long. The Uniting for Consensus proposal is flexible in leaving it to the regions to determine the duration of each regional mandate. Its approach is democratic and accountable in providing for periodic elections and re-elections at intervals to be determined by each region. In that way, there would always be an opportunity to adjust to changing circumstances and to evolving needs.

It would also spare us the damaging and divisive decision, which the pending draft resolution would force on us now, of choosing among candidates — each one worthy in its own right — that seek special status in a permanent seat that they will hold into the future, no matter what the future may hold.

Canada will therefore vote against the pending draft resolution, for all the reasons we have given. In the interests of this institution and for the sake of its capacity to confront the future with flexibility and fairness, we urge other Member States to do the same.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): New Zealand has said many times in the General Assembly Hall that the current structure of the Security Council is unrepresentative and anachronistic.

In considering the nature of the expansion of the Security Council, our overriding concern is to ensure that the Security Council is more effective and representative for the twenty-first century. Any satisfactory expansion of the Council would need to include Japan.

With respect to today's debate, we acknowledge the efforts of the sponsors of the draft resolution to take the debate forward, both in terms of the composition of the Security Council and of its working methods.

In discussing the draft resolution before us, New Zealand would like to highlight two core principles. First, we have since 1945 opposed any extension of the veto right. The current draft is not yet unequivocally clear on this point. We do not see any scope for ambiguity in a draft resolution of this nature.

Secondly, we believe firmly in the principle of accountability. With respect to the addition of new permanent members, our strong preference would be for a mechanism which provides for permanent membership to be "reviewable". Such a review should be periodic, as Sweden has suggested, and not a once-only process.

Successful Security Council reform is deeply important to New Zealand. We do not want to see this process fail. We remain open to looking at all options and hope that a satisfactory outcome which reflects our core principles is possible.

The draft resolution as currently worded does not reflect those core principles.

Ms. Rivera (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks for the intensive rethinking process in which we are involved. The report of the High-level Panel, the report of the Secretary-General and, lastly, the draft final document that you, Mr. President, submitted to us following earlier consultations have given a significant boost to the process of negotiations which we began so many years ago.

My country, as a founding Member of the United Nations, fully supports the ultimate objective of the reform — that is, strengthening the multilateral system on the basis of the principles of international law and in particular those pertaining to the legal equality of States. That is why we believe that the reform of the organ now under consideration, with the historic impact that such reform will undoubtedly have, can be carried out only if we can rely on the greatest possible political support from all States Members of the Organization.

For that reason, we deem it extremely important to take the time necessary carefully to analyse all the options and the possible consequences of Council reform and not to rush into a taking a decision that would bring about significant divisiveness among Member States.

Uruguay cannot support any reform of the Security Council that would envisage increasing the number of Member States having the right of veto. As we have stated repeatedly, we firmly oppose the right of veto, which undermines one of the basic pillars of public international law: the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

We believe that the right of veto may perhaps have been necessary in historical circumstances very different from the current ones and that it definitely does not promote democracy in the Organization — one of the cherished goals towards which we have been working tirelessly together with other Members.

The first delegations of this country to the Organization perhaps expressed it more eloquently. The representative of Uruguay, Mr. Charlone, stated before the General Assembly in October 1952 that:

> "Today ... there may be a hope that in the near future the veto will become a thing of the past, with the spinning-wheel and the bronze hatchet, and will be no more to the peoples than the sign and symbol of a vanished world based on inequality among States, the privileges of power and the denial of the rule of law and morality." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Plenary Meetings, 384th meeting, para. 87*)

We share the concern expressed by many of the representatives who spoke earlier as to the concentration of efforts on the question of Council reform. While it is an important aspect of the reform of the Organization, this is not the end of the story. We need to continue to work to address other fundamental issues, such as the promotion of development; the revitalization and strengthening of the General Assembly; reform of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights; and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): For the past 10 years, Belgium has been actively involved in discussions on Security Council reform. Our thinking on this matter has been coordinated within a group of 10 countries; our objective was realistic, pragmatic, balanced reform that will serve to reconcile the Council's efficiency and its representativeness. For us, neither direct national interests nor ambitions of our own were involved; our motivation was born of our conviction that preserving the Council's legitimacy and authority is in the interest of the Organization and, thus, in the interest of us all. We were convinced also that to do that it was indispensable that the composition of the Security Council be adapted to the realities of today's world. It was thus that we formulated a number of ideas and proposals in the hope that we could make a positive contribution to the debate.

Those ideas are now reflected in draft resolution A/59/L.64, spearheaded by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. In that connection, let me recall its four key provisions: expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories; an expansion balanced among geographical groups and between North and South; a review clause, which would enable the Council to remain in step with world developments; and a stress on working methods, with a view to guaranteeing greater transparency and openness in the work of the Council. We decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution, because we agree with the proposal put forward by the group of four.

The first element — expansion in the two categories of membership — is clearly the one most characteristic of the proposal. Here, one may wonder why a country such as Belgium would support the creation of new permanent seats. Quite simply, we believe that the presence of permanent members makes the Council effective in managing issues affecting international peace and security. Effectiveness is involved here, but also authority. By bringing together around one table the major actors on the international diplomatic stage — those which make the greatest diplomatic, military and financial contribution to the Organization — the Council can speak with a voice that no one can ignore. Moreover, permanent status obliges members to assume their burdens fully and with a sense of responsibility: a permanent seat obliges a country to take a loftier view and to give structural development priority over ephemeral matters. Would the Security Council possess the same authority with only non-permanent members? Would its resolutions have the same force? We must acknowledge that the world has changed and that there is no further reason to limit this status to the five post-War permanent members. Council reform will make sense only if its purpose is to better reflect today's geopolitical realities.

Obviously, that does not mean that it is not equally important for other States to have an opportunity to become members of the Security Council. Non-permanent members too must be able to contribute actively to the work of the Council. The non-permanent nature of their mandates and the constant renewal of the Council enables the Council to draw on innovative approaches, perspectives and viewpoints that can enrich the debate and prevent it from taking place in a closed "club". Here again, we should take account of the changes that have taken place and ensure better representation for developing countries.

Let me also note that this proposal would enable countries of the South to become permanent members. Specifically, in line with the model-A proposal of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, it would provide the African continent with two permanent seats. In our view, that important action is legitimate in terms of representativeness. I would also recall that in recent years the focus of the Security Council has been largely on Africa. We consider that the presence on the Council of African regional Powers ready to shoulder their responsibility to prevent and mediate crises, aided by their knowledge of the region and of the situation in Africa, would be a clear added value for the Council.

Today, not to take a decision — not to take action — is not an option. We all know that the failure to take a decision would be to perpetuate the present

situation or to confirm the status quo in a world that is constantly developing. Failure to adapt amounts to regression. I do not think that is the message we want to send with the September summit in view.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Let me start, Mr. President, by thanking you for organizing this debate.

Denmark is a sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.64. Denmark believes in a strong United Nations, a United Nations where decisions correspond to the opinions and desires of the membership. Denmark believes that the composition of the Security Council must reflect the world as it appears today. Denmark believes that the challenges the world is facing in the twenty-first century can be met only through enhanced legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness for the work of the Security Council. And finally, Denmark believes the time is now right for a decision on reform of the Council. That is why we decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution before us.

The present composition of the Security Council is a reflection of a world that no longer exists. We need a Security Council that will enable the international community to effectively meet the challenges the world is facing in the twenty-first century. The Security Council must continue to play a decisive role in the promotion of peace, security, human rights and democracy. But for it to do so more effectively, broader representation is needed. A broad majority of the membership has in recent months demonstrated clear support for reform and expansion of the Security Council.

Denmark shares that view and has expressed support for expansion: expansion achieved by increasing the number of permanent members and non-permanent seats and by including developing and developed countries as permanent members.

The draft resolution before us not only reflects that view but goes further. It meets our concerns by outlining a future Security Council with more balanced regional representation. In that way, voices representing the whole world will be made much stronger, thereby enhancing the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of Security Council decisions. Here, I mean effectiveness in the sense that the collective pressure to adhere to Security Council decisions will increase. Broader representation will also enhance the Council's responsiveness to the views and needs of all Member States. In that respect, we call on African members of the General Assembly to support this proposal, since it greatly enhances African influence in the Security Council.

A Security Council with those qualifications is exactly what Denmark has worked for over the years. We strongly support this multilateral approach as a way of dealing with the world of tomorrow.

Adoption and implementation of draft resolution A/59/L.64 will mark not the conclusion of the Security Council reform process, but the beginning. The review clause is an excellent mechanism to maintain continued dialogue within the General Assembly on the Security Council reform issue.

If we, the General Assembly, can take a decision on this important issue only when we all agree, we will never move forward. It is time for compromise; it is time for decision. The present draft resolution gives us a unique opportunity to act. As we all know too well, this issue has already been on our agenda for more than 12 years. An early decision will be a great leap forward in our common effort to make progress on the comprehensive United Nations reform agenda. By adopting the draft resolution we will send a clear message: a clear message to the world saying that we want a stronger United Nations capable of addressing the new threats and challenges the world is facing. Moreover, an early decision on reform of the Security Council will stimulate momentum and optimism in our preparations for the 2005 summit.

There is no alternative to this draft resolution. Rejection would mean no to change, no to reform and yes to the status quo. That is not Denmark's approach to the United Nations.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): On several occasions Chile has stated that at this historic juncture it is in favour of a comprehensive reform of the United Nations that would reaffirm the principles and values of the Charter and thereby enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization, thus bringing it into step with today's world. We take that position because we understand that development, international security, democracy and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Ultimately, the challenge before us is to strengthen multilateralism by enhancing its effectiveness in order to make it relevant.

It is against that background that we must view the reforms envisaged for the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the Secretariat. Thus, reform of the Security Council is an important element of the broader process of United Nations reform, but it should not monopolize it.

Our country would like to see a renewal of the Security Council that would make it more representative, transparent and effective. An increase in its membership would help to achieve that objective, but it must go hand in hand with improving the working methods of the Council and reviewing the rights and obligations of its members.

Chile is of the view that draft resolution A/59/L.64 contains positive elements aimed at adapting the Security Council to the new challenges and threats being faced by the international community.

Chile supports the addition of new permanent members, but without the right of veto. That is consistent with the fundamental value that we attach to the principle of the equality of States before the law and to the democratization of international entities, which is one of the objectives of Chile's foreign policy. I should like to recall that at the San Francisco Conference, in 1945, the provisions of the Charter that enshrine the right of veto of the permanent members were adopted by 30 votes in favour to 14 against. Chile — a founding Member of the Organization — voted against. At that time, Chile also supported and voted in favour of an Australian amendment excluding Chapter VI of the Charter from the reach of the veto. Australia's amendment was not adopted, but it received significant support from such countries as Brazil, Cuba, Iran, Mexico, the Netherlands and, of course, Australia and Chile.

Similarly, throughout the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, my country has not only maintained that position but has actually proposed the elimination of the veto with effect from 2015. And although the total elimination of the right of veto may seem somewhat unrealistic and remote, we do not reject serious consideration of intermediate formulas, such as restricting its exercise to matters falling under Chapter VII.

We recognize the value of those provisions of the draft resolution before us that are aimed at improving the working methods of the Security Council by promoting greater transparency and efficiency.

At the bilateral level, Chile has supported the aspiration of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan to occupy permanent seats on the Security Council. Their membership would improve the representativeness of the Council. Our support is without prejudice to our historical position on the veto. As a matter of principle, and in keeping with its historical position of rejecting the veto, Chile makes a specific reservation with regard to the granting of the right of veto to the new permanent members, whether immediately or subject to a suspension or moratorium.

Further, we wish to place on record that, with regard to the increase in the membership of the Security Council, the status of Latin America and the Caribbean has been diminished when compared to that of other regions — especially taking account of the criteria related to quantitative and qualitative contributions set out by the Secretary-General in his proposal on this issue.

Chile will continue to support the building of the consensus required for what we hope will be comprehensive and successful reform of the Organization. Chile's preference is for an effort leading to compromise and agreement — which has always been its policy when confronted with divergent views. We have been working to that end in the Assembly as well as in the group of friends of reform.

You may be assured, Mr. President, of our cooperation throughout the remainder of the process. Let us not forget that, despite all the theatrics, this is but one scene in a drama that continues to unfold.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this round of plenary meetings dedicated to one of the most pressing and crucial issues for the Organization: reform of the Security Council. I share the view, expressed by many delegations, that this truly historic debate is the culmination of a decade-long discussion on this issue in the General Assembly. If, as philosophers claim, thoughts and ideas do indeed materialize and time and energy do indeed translate into concrete forms and deeds, then I am sure we are destined to succeed this time.

Ukraine considers reform of the Security Council to be an issue of exceptional international significance. Making that body more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent — especially with regard to decision-making — is vital in adapting the United Nations to the global realities and challenges of the twenty-first century.

As a sponsor of draft resolution A/59/L.64, Ukraine fully endorses the introductory statement made by the representative of Brazil. Ukraine's support of the proposal stems logically from our overall approach to the issue of Security Council reform, which is based on the following principles.

First, Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Secondly, expansion of the Security Council should be carried out in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent. We support increased representation in that body for developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Preserving the status quo in both categories of membership would, in our view, only complicate existing problems.

Thirdly, since the composition of the Group of Eastern European States has doubled over the past decade, that Group should have an additional non-permanent seat.

Fourthly, Security Council reform should result in the improvement of the Council's working methods. In particular, those countries that contribute most to the Organization militarily, diplomatically and financially should be involved in the Council's decision-making process.

I believe that the model submitted by the group of four, which contains all of those elements and meets my country's concerns, fully corresponds to Ukraine's approach to this crucial issue. Our support of that formula is in no way intended to challenge the interests of any particular country or group of countries. We fully agree that there is a need for the broadest possible agreement among Member States on this issue. Still, I believe that we should heed the Secretary-General's appeal "to take a decision on this important issue before the summit in September 2005" (*A/59/2005, para. 170*).

Ukraine fully concurs with the view held by many Member States — including the other sponsors of the draft resolution — that Security Council expansion is an integral part of comprehensive United Nations reform aimed at enabling the Organization to react effectively to the whole spectrum of challenges and opportunities in today's world, in the security, development and human rights fields alike.

Modernization of the Security Council is one of the essential elements of the broader United Nations agenda, which encompasses such crucial aspects as revitalizing the General Assembly, strengthening United Nations human rights mechanisms, reforming the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, reinvigorating United Nations activity in support of democracy, et cetera. Through many manifestations of Ukraine's commitment to development, security and human rights for all — such as my country's chairmanship of the Third Committee and our direct participation as one of the President's facilitators in the process of preparing for the September summit — we will continue to spare no effort in helping to make progress in each of those challenging areas.

Today, we have an excellent opportunity to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations by accomplishing the long-overdue reform of one of its main bodies, the Security Council. We cannot and should not miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am confident that, under your able leadership, Mr. President, we will rise to this challenge and move ahead towards the successful outcome of the September summit.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is prepared to support any reasonable option for Security Council expansion if it is based on the broadest possible agreement within the United Nations. We believe that such an agreement would entail support for a decision more substantial than simply the legally required two-thirds vote. Voting in the General Assembly should not cause a split among Member States and thereby weaken, rather than strengthen, the United Nations and its Security Council. That, we are convinced, would be in no one's interests.

In that connection, those who advocate the swift adoption of concrete decisions on so important an issue as Security Council reform have a serious responsibility. In order to avoid harmful consequences

for the future of the Organization, they should thoroughly calculate all the positive and negative aspects of their move and provide a sober estimate of the real level of support they enjoy.

We believe that Security Council reform should be guided by the following principles.

First, the task is to increase the Council's effectiveness and to provide for more balanced Council membership by including major and influential developing countries. At the same time, making the Security Council more representative must not undermine its effectiveness. That is why we advocate preserving the Council's compact size and insist that the membership of an expanded Security Council not exceed a reasonable size — say, 20-plus members.

Moreover, in the event of a decision to expand the Security Council in both categories, we believe that the right of the veto should not be granted a priori before the list of new permanent Security Council members is determined. We reaffirm the Russian Federation's unwavering position that any dilution of the status of the five current permanent members — first and foremost, of the right of the veto — is categorically unacceptable. On the basis of that overarching position, and guided by its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia will continue to advocate reaching the necessary agreement.

Mr. van den Berg (Netherlands): The Netherlands fully recognizes the need to reform the Security Council. We believe that the balanced expansion of its membership would increase its credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness. The Netherlands also agrees that we should arrive at concrete decisions before September. After the summit, it will be impossible to build the kind of momentum that we have now.

I should like to make five substantive points.

First, with regard to the issue of criteria, the Netherlands believes that objective criteria are of key importance for the composition of the Council, with regard to both aspiring permanent members and aspiring elected members. Such criteria should reflect not only contributions to international peace and security, but also the willingness to meet internationally agreed development goals, including levels of development assistance.

My second point concerns the size of the Council. There must be a fine balance between increasing the representativeness of the Council and maintaining its efficiency and effectiveness. The Netherlands firmly believes that with a Council of 25 members — as proposed by both the group of four and Uniting for Consensus — that balance would be stretched to the limit.

My third point relates to the use of the veto. In line with the need for effective decision-making, it is our preference to limit the use of the veto in general, and we certainly oppose extension of the veto to new permanent members. Unfortunately, the language on the veto contained in the resolution of the group of four is still ambivalent. In our view, any reform proposal should entail an explicit amendment to the Charter preventing the granting of the veto beyond the current permanent members.

My fourth point concerns the review. The Netherlands agrees with the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that "no change to the composition of the Security Council should itself be regarded as permanent or unchallengeable in the future" (A/59/565, para. 255). In our view, it would be in the spirit of that argument to include a binding periodic-review clause that would ensure that new permanent members could be held accountable.

My last point has to do with the Council's working methods. Improvement of the working methods must be an integral part of the reform agenda. The involvement of United Nations Member States that are not members of the Security Council should increase, notably in the work of its subsidiary bodies. Council interaction with other United Nations bodies should become more frequent and substantive, and we favour more transparent decision-making by the Council.

Finally, the Netherlands sympathizes with the ambitions of the countries of the group of four, and we believe that the four aspiring countries are capable of taking on the responsibilities involved in shouldering the extra burden of promoting global security. The Netherlands also sympathizes with Africa's desire to obtain a permanent presence in a reformed Council, and we encourage Africa to decide soon on its candidates for permanent seats.

We look forward to a further constructive exchange of views on the outstanding issues, such as

the review and the veto, with the goal of reaching concrete decisions prior to the September summit.

Ms. Tahir-Kheli (United States of America): Our discussions on United Nations reform reflect unity on one point: we all believe in the Organization. That is why United Nations reform is so important. We want to change this institution so that it can become stronger and more effective, to enable it to fulfil the vision of its founders when they signed the Charter 60 years ago. We need a strong, effective United Nations if we are to confront successfully the many challenges we all face in the twenty-first century, including terrorism, mass poverty, human rights violations, epidemic disease, environmental degradation and so many other issues.

The United States is committed to a strong and effective United Nations. Our presence and our actions over many years confirm that fact. The United States, as President Bush has said, recognizes that no nation can achieve its foreign policy objectives alone. Global challenges, he affirmed, must be answered by active, effective, multilateral institutions.

The High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the Secretary-General have done a great service in identifying the broad areas in which we must enact reforms.

The United States appreciates your leadership, Mr. President, in helping move the United Nations towards agreement on key areas of reform. We will continue to work with you and with other Member States at this historic time. The United States shares the conviction that no single area of reform should be addressed to the exclusion of others. The United States has worked extensively with a large number of countries to ensure that United Nations reform is comprehensive and successful.

I come before the Assembly to strongly urge all those present — including the four good friends of the United States who submitted the framework resolution — to consider the potential impact on the Organization and on its vital work of pressing forward with a vote at this time.

I want to reiterate that the United States supports expansion of the Security Council. We have on several occasions expressed our strong support for Japan's candidacy for permanent membership. We anticipate that other countries will qualify for permanent or semi-permanent membership, and we have proposed criteria to that end. As Secretary Rice has noted, we recognize that 2005 is not 1945.

But Security Council reform alone will not address the most pressing problems of the Organization, nor will proposals to alter the Council garner the support needed to amend the Charter absent broader reform. Regardless of timing, we will oppose any proposal that would make the Council less effective than it is today. And we will oppose calling for votes on proposals that do not command the breadth of support necessary to be put into practice. Let me be as clear as possible: the United States does not think any proposal to expand the Security Council — including one based on our own ideas — should be voted upon at this stage.

It is important that all understand that while we disagree with this resolution, the nations that have put it forward are our friends. We reiterate our willingness to work with them and with other countries in the effort to achieve Security Council enlargement via a plan that is supported by the vast majority of United Nations Members and which results in a stronger, more effective Security Council, in the context of overall reform of the United Nations. Unfortunately, however, the timing and substance of the proposed resolution does not accomplish those ends.

Let me share with the Assembly some of the reasons that have led my Government to the position that it cannot support the draft resolution.

First, moving to a vote on this or any other draft resolution involving Security Council reform is bound to be divisive at this stage. The Charter of the United Nations is designed in such a way that reform of the Security Council requires broad consensus, and that is as it should be. We do not yet know the actual number of countries that might vote in favour of the draft resolution, but we do know that world opinion is still greatly divided on this issue.

While there is, in our view, broad consensus regarding the need for Security Council expansion, major differences exist regarding what kind of expansion should occur. In addition to the proposal before us, the African Union has initiated action to introduce its own draft resolution. Although the African Union draft resolution may contain a number of points in common with the draft resolution under consideration, there are differences, many of them significant. We understand the aspirations of African

nations, the vast majority of which did not enjoy independence when the United Nations was created in 1946, to serve on the Security Council. We also know that a group of countries that have joined together as Uniting for Consensus have put forward a draft resolution that proposes a very different formula for Security Council enlargement. In short, while we see valuable elements in each of those efforts, it is clear that, as yet, there is no broad-based agreement.

Secondly, Security Council expansion requires amendment of the Charter. Under Article 108 of the Charter, expansion of the Security Council requires lengthy constitutional processes in many nations, including my own. In our system, for example, the support of two thirds of the United States Senate is needed to pass an amendment to a treaty. We need to prepare the way carefully to ensure that whatever we vote for in this body will gain the requisite support of Member States required by the Charter during the ratification process. A vote to lock in a particular mode of Security Council expansion at this stage would interfere with our ability to shape a proposal later that would stand a reasonable chance of securing the requisite ratifications from Member State legislatures.

In that regard, I would note that this is not a partisan issue in my country or in many others. Whether Democrats or Republicans, United States Senators — like officials of our executive branch — will be looking to see whether Security Council enlargement is part of a broader package of needed reforms and whether it makes the Council more or less effective in discharging its important duties.

Thirdly, the search for a broad consensus should be based on agreement on criteria. Security Council expansion is necessary and will have far reaching consequences. We all recognize that the world has changed profoundly in the 60 years since the Charter was signed and this Organization was created. The founders struggled with some of the same issues we face today in applying the principles that they enshrined in the Charter. Their example is instructive today. Instead of choosing between a body that was representative but too large and unwieldy to deal with emerging security situations, or one that was efficient at the expense of representativeness, they created a system with multiple bodies with different roles. To deal with security, they formed a body of countries with the demonstrated capability to contribute to international peace and security. To ensure worldwide representation, they created the General Assembly.

The only responsible way to approach Security Council expansion is to ensure, as did the founders, that those nations accorded permanent seats meet appropriate criteria for the tremendous duties and responsibilities that they will assume. The founders did not arbitrarily pick a number for permanent membership and then try to force-fit countries into those slots. Instead, they asked which States had the demonstrated capacity to contribute substantially to international peace and security.

I have mentioned before the criteria that, in our view, define the qualifications for permanent membership: size of economy and population, military capacity, contributions to peacekeeping operations, commitment to democracy and human rights, financial contributions to the United Nations, and non-proliferation and counter-terrorism records. Geographic also needs to be taken into consideration. We are prepared to consider other proposals for appropriate criteria, but we are committed to following the basic principles that have served us all so well.

Fourthly, efficiency is essential. The Security Council has been an effective body, and it is more relevant today than ever. One of the first principles of reform should be to do no harm. Once we have reached consensus on new permanent members, we should consider some expansion of the non-permanent membership that maintains representativeness, but without making the Council so large that it becomes ineffective.

In closing, I ask all countries to again very carefully consider the draft resolution before us and to ask this critical question: does the draft resolution serve to strengthen the United Nations? We believe that it does not. We will work with other Members to achieve the enlargement of the Security Council, but only in the right way and at the right time. We urge the Assembly, therefore, to oppose this draft resolution and, should it come to a vote, to vote against it.

Mr. Choi Young-jin (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea supports reform of the Security Council that adequately reflects the changed international environment since the adoption of the Charter 60 years ago. A reformed Security Council should be more representative, democratic, transparent, accountable and effective than today's.

Expanding the number of permanent seats in the Security Council would run counter to the goals of Security Council reform and to the fundamental principles of the United Nations. In this regard, it is with regret that we note the submission by the group of four of a draft resolution (A/59/L.64) that provides for six new permanent members in addition to the existing five.

I would like to explain in detail some of the most important reasons why the addition of six new permanent members under the terms of the group of four draft resolution would be to the detriment of the international community.

First and foremost, the concept of permanent membership is contrary to the fundamental reality that the world is in constant flux. History has taught us that nothing made by human hands is ever truly permanent. Given the vicissitudes of the modern world, it would be great folly to accord special permanent status to a handful of States, because whatever decision is made now will inevitably be out of synch with changing realities in decades to come. We should not repeat the mistakes that were made six decades ago.

Secondly, the addition of new permanent members would be inequitable and unfair. The predominance of 11 permanent members in the Security Council would alienate the other 180 Member States, depriving them of the opportunity and political will to make substantial contributions to international peace and security. Most Member States will have no choice but to sit on the sidelines while an oligarchy of 11 wields a monopoly of power over international peace and security.

Thirdly, an increase in the number of permanent members would heavily impair the accountability of the Security Council. Once selected, the six new permanent members would hold on to their privileged status in perpetuity, regardless of how well they carried out their responsibilities on behalf of the general membership. Without periodic elections, the international community would have no means to seek accountability for what those 11 permanent members did in the Council. We should not forget that absolute power is apt to corrupt.

Fourthly, the creation of six new permanent seats would also seriously undercut the effectiveness of the Security Council. It would, of course, be quite difficult for the Council to address any significant issues that bore directly on one or more of its 11 permanent members. Even in cases that did not affect those 11 permanent members directly, the long process of bargaining and horse-trading among the expanded permanent membership would impede the effectiveness and efficient functioning of the Council.

Fifthly, the addition of new permanent members would create a cascade effect within the United Nations system, adversely affecting the fair and equitable distribution of membership in other bodies. Permanent members of the Security Council have enjoyed the right to be present permanently at the General Committee of the General Assembly and have had the de facto privilege of maintaining a judge permanently at the International Court of Justice and of occupying key positions throughout the United Nations system. The more than doubling of the number of permanent members would strip other Member States of opportunities to be represented in important United Nations bodies.

Last but not least, we must consider the matter of regional representation, taking as a guide the records of existing permanent members. To put it plainly, no permanent member has represented the interests of the region to which it belongs. If regions are to be represented adequately, each regional group should be given a fair share that enables States in the region to gain a presence in the Security Council in a fair and equitable manner, with accountability ensured through election or rotation.

My delegation is deeply concerned at the possibility that the complex four-stage process envisaged by the group of four will lead us nowhere. We are quite sceptical about the chances of the first stage coming to pass, but, if it does, it will be followed by the much more complicated and difficult second and third stages, namely the selection of the six new permanent members and the amendment of the related provisions of the Charter. The pursuit of this "mission impossible" would inevitably plunge Member States into a morass of bitter debate for an unpredictable period of time, taking other critical reforms hostage, including those that affect development, human rights, management of the Secretariat and collective international security. Nor, given the known positions of some of the permanent five, is there any guarantee that agreement in the General Assembly would be followed by successful ratification of the amendments to the Charter — the fourth and final stage on this long

journey. The stark reality is that the group of four's multistage approach risks derailing the whole United Nations process in general and United Nations reform in particular.

Let me now turn to a real, workable alternative. The Uniting for Consensus proposal that was circulated last Friday does not contain any increase in the number of permanent seats, and at the same time demonstrates that equitable, fair and democratic reform is possible. States that seek frequent or even continuous representation would have to act responsibly in order to sustain the support of the general membership at periodic elections. Moreover, the Uniting for Consensus proposal is a simpler yet complete package for Security Council reform that can be achieved without any complicated multistage processes.

The Republic of Korea places a high value on the successful reform of the Security Council. I remain hopeful that, in our collective wisdom, we can avoid a divisive and costly process and achieve our goals for reform through the building of a genuine consensus on this vital matter.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Mr. President, I would first of all like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to discuss the proposal of the group of four on Security Council reform and for providing the framework to advance this key aspect of overall United Nations reform. Numerous sponsors and supporters of our draft resolution have already explained why this draft best serves the interests of all Members, of all regions and of the United Nations as a whole. Our sponsors represent a broad spectrum of countries: big and small, developing and industrialized, North and South, permanent members of the Security Council, and countries that look back on long years of stability as well as some that have gone through major transformations in the recent past.

This shows that the draft resolution is not, as some would have it, in the interest of just a few. No, this kind of support is a clear sign of balance. The group of four proposal is not directed against anybody but offers something to everybody. No other draft or reform proposal comes close to the kind of large, broad-based and diverse support that our draft resolution enjoys. This is not surprising, because the other initiatives are strongly motivated by national, regional and subregional issues, or by efforts to maintain the status quo. The proposal by Uniting for Consensus, for instance, cannot prove that it has substantial support in the membership. It is even unclear whether one of the core members of Uniting for Consensus — Algeria — is still behind that proposal, which is, as far as we understand it, not in line with the African Union's position.

These narrower interests, however understandable they may be, should not and will not take precedence over the common goal of improving the major institution mandated with the maintenance of global peace and security.

I should now like to comment on some of the counter-arguments against our draft resolution in the past weeks and months.

The first is the demand for comprehensive reform and the implied criticism that the group of four proposal somehow stands in the way of that goal. That is not the case; on the contrary. We fully agree with the Secretary- General's view that United Nations reform must be comprehensive and should not follow a selective approach. But that, of course, means tackling all important aspects of reform in parallel and not shying away from issues that are more controversial — such as Security Council reform.

The Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, with the report "In larger freedom" and with the draft outcome document, provided the road map for reform in a great many important fields. The group of four, with its framework draft resolution, provided a way forward for one of the key aspects of reform that cannot be taken up in this first track.

We believe that the group of four proposal is an indispensable complementary element of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations which we all want to achieve. It is also the only proposal that is capable of gaining majority support, as it corresponds to the proposals made in the High-level Panel report and in the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom". There is no doubt: if this draft resolution is adopted, it will give a strong political impetus to the achievement of substantial results at the September summit on other important issues such as development, human rights, security and institutional reform.

The second point that is often raised is the question of effectiveness, which has also been mentioned today. Some critics of the group of four draft resolution have held that implementation of the

resolution would undermine the effectiveness of the Council by expanding it to a total of 25 members. That criticism, of course, stems from the fallacy of seeing effectiveness only as a function of size. It disregards the fact that effectiveness is determined to an even greater extent by the legitimacy of a body's decision-making, by its structure and by its working methods. For example, some of those who oppose expanding the Council to 25 members did not oppose the expansion of NATO and would certainly disagree with the notion that the NATO Council has become less effective since it was expanded to 26 members.

The third concern I would like to address is that reform based on the group of four proposal will not be ratified by all of the five permanent members. Our proposal would strengthen the problem-solving capacity of the Security Council. That would be in the interests of everyone, including the permanent five. Once our proposal is adopted by more than two thirds of the whole United Nations membership, the opponents of this draft resolution will be faced with the question: do one or two permanent members really want to block the development and the change for the better of the whole Organization? Do they want to be seen in worldwide public opinion as those who deny to the developing countries representation in the Council on an equal footing — as permanent members?

On a previous occasion, in 1963, some of the five permanent members voted against expansion of the Council. In the end, they showed the wisdom not to be spoilers of reform and ratified the expansion despite their initial opposition. We trust that the same wisdom and respect for the will of the majority — and a democratic decision taken by all United Nations Members — will prevail once again.

Fourthly, we do not see the validity of saying that a vote would be divisive. We feel that that is a strange understanding of democracy. The Charter clearly provides for voting as a regular and legitimate means of decision-making in the General Assembly. All of the world's democratic parliaments decide by voting. The principle of one member, one vote is the most palpable sign of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations, regardless of size or political weight. It seems very far-fetched to tell them that to exercise that most basic right would be divisive. In the United Nations, as in all democratic parliaments, decisions are taken on a daily basis by voting, and the minority agrees to accept the result. There is no other way in which a democracy can function.

Let me stress once more that the group of four proposal for Security Council reform contains, as a vital element, a review clause. We do not want to advocate reform that is immutable and inflexible; we want it to be put to the test again after 15 years. Our proposal gives the United Nations membership the necessary tool to review the Council's composition and working methods and to adapt them anew if political realities have changed.

I also want to reiterate that the group of four draft resolution is the only proposal that can get reform of the Council's working methods going, instead of tossing the ball once more into the court of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform, as the Uniting for Consensus text does.

No other proposal provides for meaningful structural reform of the Security Council. More balance can be achieved in the composition of the Council only by expanding both permanent and non-permanent membership. Restricting expansion to non-permanent members would only maintain the status quo and increase the disparity in the Council's composition. And expanding the Council by "two or so" could never achieve the geographical balance required by the new political realities and would perpetuate the current discrimination against large parts of the developing world.

We elaborated this draft resolution in a process of the broadest consultation over several months, and it was on the market several weeks before its submission in order to give everybody time to form an opinion. We took care to accommodate regional groups such as the African Union and the Caribbean Community, and we waited for the outcomes of their summits. We are willing to continue this dialogue before we proceed to a vote.

But there will soon be a point at which all arguments have been expressed, all views heard and all possibilities for compromise exhausted. Then the only step left will be to put the draft resolution to a vote and come to a decision early enough to leave the September summit free to deal with the development agenda and the Millennium Goals. If, however, we fail to make progress on this issue before September, the success of the summit may be compromised and the repercussions of failed Security Council reform may

hamper the implementation of the Development Goals for years to come. Let us not take that risk. That is why the Secretary-General, in his report, asked us to take a decision on Security Council reform before September.

We are grateful to the President of the General Assembly for incorporating this second track of Security Council reform into his reform timetable. We will also ask the President to assume a crucial role in the second step of the group of four reform proposal by determining the most appropriate timing and sequence for the selection of candidates for new permanent seats.

The group of four and the other sponsors are convinced that Security Council reform is an indispensable part of comprehensive United Nations reform. We are convinced that reform of the Council would strengthen the United Nations and its ability to address the threats and challenges of the twenty-first century. And we are convinced that our carefully formulated draft resolution takes into account the interests of all Member States and all regional groups. It is the best achievable compromise, and there is no realistic alternative to this proposal.

After more than a decade of discussion, we now have the unique opportunity to decide on the first meaningful structural reform of the Security Council in 60 years. Let us not miss this historic opportunity. If we fail, we might not have another opportunity for many years to come. We therefore ask the General Assembly — ourselves, the Member States — to live up to our responsibility and to adopt this draft resolution.

Mr. Kmoníček (Czech Republic): We consider ourselves a real reform-minded country and we have no vested interest in the reform, except one — the better functioning of the whole United Nations system.

As for Security Council reform, after 10 years of dialogue, which has strangely resembled parallel monologues in which divisions of opinion were too large to be bridged, it is time to move on. Let us be pragmatic. The further analysis and deliberations proposed by some will bring us exactly what some expect — more talk and absolutely no action. The problem of Security Council reform will be as divisive as it is now and as it was before the dialogue. The division of opinion on this question is natural; the stakes are too high, and it is one of the clear signs of the health of democracy that opinion can be diverse. Voting on such an issue is the most obvious way of resolving it.

My country, being one of the sponsors of the model submitted by the group of four, has been reiterating its position for many years now. The proposal reflects our decade-long position on reform of the Security Council that would enlarge its numbers in both categories. On the issue of the veto, we believe that this proposal mirrors our support for its use to be voluntarily limited.

Whatever opinion on the proposed new shape of the Security Council one may have, one thing is obvious. The new composition of the Council goes hand in hand with the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. Let us be realistic. That is the way for the United Nations to stay relevant.

Mr. Berruga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on the overall issue of Security Council reform. We are mindful of the higher significance of our deliberations insofar as they deal with the organ that is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Given the sensitivity of that issue, our margin for error should be virtually nil.

Mexico is committed to a comprehensive reform of the United Nations and, certainly, of the Security Council. The new threats that the world is facing require a prompt, effective and united response so that our societies can live in peace and pursue their aspirations for development and well-being. This debate should result in the design and implementation of a model for the Security Council that enables us to achieve those goals in an efficient, more legitimate and equitable manner.

We begin this debate taking the model presented by the group of four as our point of reference. However, we should bear in mind that it is not the only proposal being considered by the international community. I make special note of that put forth by the African Union and that presented by the Uniting for Consensus movement, to which I will refer later.

Should the group of four's draft resolution be put to a vote, each and every Member of the United Nations should be perfectly clear about its consequences and implications for the future of our Organization.

The main argument — the one most frequently raised in support of that model — is that, after 60 years of existence, the time has come to adapt the Security Council to the realities of the twenty-first century. Indeed, we have heard that phrase repeatedly spoken today. The formula that has been found to turn that premise into reality is through the creation of six new permanent members with "the same responsibilities and obligations as the current permanent members" (*A/59/L.64, para. 5 (a)*). That is a central feature of the proposal that would not be mitigated by the suggested moratorium on the exercise of the veto power.

We are presented with three very clear messages from the proponents of that model. The first is that the world is at a juncture this year that must be fixed in time for all posterity, making it a permanent reality. In other words, current conditions should be preserved forever. The second message is that the inclusion of six countries will make a tangible and substantive difference in the way we deal with global threats to peace and security. The third message is the claim to the veto power.

The first argument is based upon a static view of the world. It is paradoxical that the same argument used to promote reform — that the world is changing and has changed since 1945 — is precisely that being used to persuade Member States that nothing should change in the future. We would then be voting for a world in stasis.

The second argument, in favour of creating six new permanent seats, has the much deeper political implication that the contribution of 180 countries is not appreciated, particularly in the decision-making process. The voices and views of the majority of the membership of the United Nations would be overshadowed by the positions of the few. Furthermore, in a Security Council such as that being proposed, 11 countries with special privileges would share the table with 14 elected members. Should the proposal be adopted, we would be further concentrating political power in a handful of countries, fostering greater inequalities and hampering cooperation and the commitment of nations to the cause of peace and security.

The third argument is that, despite the growing call for the elimination or limitation of the use of the veto, we should now extend that privilege to a larger number of countries. That would without doubt represent a structural change for the Security Council that would be very harmful to our collective security system.

Before voting for the draft resolution, we should keep in mind some practical consequences of creating new permanent seats. Permanent members have no need to pass, on a regular basis, the democratic test. That prevents the rest of the membership from renewing the mandate given to them, in line with the will of the international community and with global circumstances. Their performance might be very positive or very poor, yet they would continue to occupy that position. It would be impossible to assess their performance through elections meant either to renew or terminate their mandate. They would therefore lack any incentive to be accountable. On the contrary, they would be in a privileged position to better protect their national interest, whereas, according to the Charter, the Security Council, in the discharge of its responsibilities, acts on behalf of the entire membership.

Another issue is that the members of the Security Council belong to regions but represent themselves and their Governments. Consequently, supposing that a permanent member would represent its region would require that it first be entrusted with the express mandate to do so. That has never been the case in the history of the United Nations. On the contrary, as we consider the regional rivalries that this debate has sparked, it is extremely unlikely that the new permanent members would be able to act as regional representatives.

Should 11 countries succeed in obtaining the veto power — a prospect that the draft resolution openly envisages — it would in practice guarantee the paralysis of the Security Council. In view of those factors, the unavoidable question arises: How does this model improve our collective security system?

Give the sensitivity of this issue — the functionality of the system is at stake — it is critical for the aspirant countries to clearly state their intentions in pursuing the veto power. By contrast, if they are not to have such power or do not seek it, they should explain their rationale for claiming permanent seats.

Lastly, the sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.64 have ignored the cascade effect that such a decision would inevitably have on countless bodies within the

United Nations family, as the Costa Rican document (A/59/856, annex) so correctly points out.

Mexico is in favour of Security Council reform that strengthens that body's representativeness, effectiveness and accountability and ensures its members are selected in a democratic manner. We firmly believe that countries that are elected and re-elected periodically by the international community would have a higher political and moral standing than they would if they occupied permanent seats. They would always have a fresh, up-to-date mandate from the membership, instead having to rely on a hazy memory of the conditions under which they attained permanent status. Re-election would mean that they enjoyed the renewed esteem and endorsement of the world majority. More important, perhaps, their performance would thus be rewarded or rejected, thereby ensuring that they conformed to the standards of behaviour that the international community wished to see reflected in the work of the Security Council.

The Uniting for Consensus countries have developed a proposal that reflects those principles — one that would prevent the United Nations from moving towards antagonism and divisiveness. According to their model, the geographical groupings would be able to decide for themselves the modalities for the distribution of the seats allotted to them. In that way, the voices of the people of the world and of each region would be better and more properly represented.

We trust that the international community will give careful consideration to the merits of that proposal, with an eye to the future. We also hope that the overall effort to reform the United Nations will continue, above and beyond the debate about the composition of the Security Council, so as to ensure that we tackle important issues such as the reform of the human rights system, the promotion of development, the fight against terrorism and the protection of the environment.

The only way in which we can be certain that reform of the Security Council will be considered and examined with the legitimacy and respect that it merits is if the entire membership believes that it is properly represented in the effort and that reform is carried out fairly and with respect for the highest standards of political ethics. Any decision on such a sensitive subject should be based on conviction and on a genuine desire to strengthen our collective security system. It should not be the result of pressure or nationalistic policies.

In order for our Organization to evolve, we cannot use the language of the twenty-first century in the economic and social spheres while at the same time using that of the nineteenth century when discussing political affairs.

Diplomacy is an asset, it one of the greatest inventions of humankind. Before its use became widespread, conflicts and disputes were invariably resolved through armed confrontation. In this house of diplomacy, the United Nations, power matters, but it does not rule. In 1945, the price of peace included the creation of the five permanent seats with which we are so familiar. In 2005, fortunately for all of us here, there is no need to pay such a price. That is the reality now, in the twenty-first century. It is our duty to ensure that that state of affairs continues.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I believe that there is no doubt — and that we all agree — that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, are in need of serious reform. They still reflect the realities of 1945. It seems to us that maintaining the status quo would present great difficulties. It cannot provide solutions to the problems of 2005, which are different in all their aspects.

We have been discussing this reform for the past 12 years. Further extensive debate has been going on for the past seven months within the United Nations, as well as outside the Organization in academic and political circles. We have been examining very carefully all proposals and ideas. We feel that the time is right to move forward.

Unanimous decisions are very desirable. Nevertheless, taking a decision by vote is a democratic process. No one should forget that in our national parliaments, decisions by vote are made every day on every issue, without consensus.

In our previous statement (see A/59/PV.26) we expressed our preference for model A. An expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories will provide balance in the Council. It will increase the accountability and transparency of that body, as well as its multicultural and multidimensional character. In our view, its decisions will be taken by developed and developing nations together. Again in our view, they will have a better chance to be implemented by all.

There is no perfect solution. At this stage, however, Greece feels that draft resolution A/59/L.64 can provide the Security Council with the means to find global solutions to global problems. We hope that it will acquire the widest possible support for the benefit of the United Nations and with a view to its renewal.

Mrs. Juul (Norway): The Security Council of today largely reflects the international situation of 1945. That restricts the representativeness, efficiency and legitimacy of the Council. That is the basic premise of today's debate — a premise that is acknowledged almost unanimously within the membership of the Organization.

Norway has argued for a balanced enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. We have always advocated the interests of small countries in the rotation of non-permanent seats. Our main priorities have been to ensure that the Council functions with cohesion and effectiveness and that the composition of the Council better reflects the current configuration of the United Nations membership. That challenge should be properly addressed in order to support and strengthen a core mandatory function of the United Nations and thereby further promote multilateralism in today's world.

Bearing that in mind, we are pleased with the modalities for enlargement reflected in the draft resolution before us. In our view, the addition of six permanent and four non-permanent seats strikes a proper balance between the demands for enhanced effectiveness and those for enhanced legitimacy. Moreover, owing to the current under-representation of the African and Latin American and Caribbean regions, we are particularly satisfied that the proposal adequately reflects the interests of those two regions. We also agree with the proposals regarding the Council's working methods aimed at enhancing transparency and inclusiveness.

Inextricably linked to the question of the composition of the Security Council is the question of veto rights. In line with the recommendation of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and as a means to ensure the Council's efficiency, the Norwegian view has been that we should refrain from extending the veto power to new permanent members. We have also consistently advocated limiting the use of the veto. We have noted the decline in recent years in the use of the veto by the current five permanent members. We expect that in the future we will witness the same restraint being exercised by the Council's permanent members. In that regard, we take note of the wording of paragraph 5 (b) of draft resolution A/29/L.64, and we welcome the statements made by representatives of the group of four that they have no intention of exercising the right of veto.

On the basis of a comprehensive assessment, Norway stands ready to support the draft resolution before us. We hope that its adoption will represent a first step towards making the Council more representative of the international community as a whole and will thereby enhance the legitimacy required of that important body.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I shou'd like at the outset to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless and constant efforts to adapt the United Nations to the realities of today's world. I should also like to pay tribute to you, Mr. President, for having convened these meetings, which provide all of us with the opportunity to have a fully transparent discussion of the various proposals before us concerning Security Council reform. I should like to assure you once again of my delegation's full support in this important exercise.

After the Second World War, the founding fathers of the Organization, in order to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which had brought untold sorrow to mankind, entrusted to the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In 1945, the States members of the Security Council represented three fourths of the world's population. Today, its composition does not reflect the current international system in terms of either demographics or power. That has considerably reduced the Council's legitimacy. Sixty years later, the reform of that important organ of the United Nations system is a historical necessity if the Council is to reflect the international scene. We must address its weak democracy and its lack of representativeness.

Equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council are universally supported by Member States, which advocate enhancing the organ's representativeness and

improving its working methods for responding to crises that threaten world peace and security.

After the many debates on this issue, my country believes that the time has come for us to act. In that connection, draft resolution A/59/L.64, introduced yesterday by Brazil on behalf of the group of four, should enhance the legitimacy of the Council by giving it additional permanent and non-permanent members. The draft resolution has a democratic nature, and we believe it reflects the international environment. The inclusion of permanent members from various regions — particularly from Latin America and the Caribbean and from Africa — should be particularly welcomed. The draft resolution is also in keeping with the attainment of the Millennium Goals, whose strategic vision is based on the closely linked triptych of development, security and human rights, in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005).

It is therefore up to us to take a decision on this issue and to continue our efforts to truly revitalize the General Assembly and reform the Economic and Social Council in order to ensure better coordination between the General Assembly and its bodies, as instituted by the Charter of the United Nations.

However, my country believes that the debate on Security Council expansion must not eclipse other subjects of vital importance that our leaders will have to consider in September. Particularly for developing countries and, even more so, least developed countries, such as mine, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is of equal, if not greater, importance.

Nonetheless, my delegation agrees with the idea of a renewed United Nations that serves the Member States constituting it. We believe that the group of four draft resolution, of which Haiti is a sponsor, could provide the necessary impetus for balanced Security Council reform that promotes international peace and security. We fully support the draft resolution and appeal to other Member States to do likewise.

Mr. Andrianarivelo-Razafy (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): Like previous speakers, Mr. President, I should like to welcome your initiative of organizing this meeting and to express my deep appreciation to you.

I have the honour and the privilege to take the floor on behalf of Madagascar. I wish to state my delegation's position on Security Council reform, particularly with regard to draft resolution A/59/L.64.

At the outset, we wish to reaffirm our solidarity and unity with Africa. Madagascar belongs to the great African family and intends to remain within it. However, we recommend that the consultations continue in an atmosphere of openness, tolerance and mutual understanding so that we can achieve positive results.

With regard to the candidacy of Japan, we see no basic objection to its becoming a permanent member of the Security Council. Here, we cannot fail to mention Japan's sustained commitment to promoting development in Africa — for example, through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development process.

Finally, I should like to reaffirm the official statement made on this subject by the President of Madagascar, His Excellency Mr. Marc Ravalomanana, during the general debate of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in September 2004 (see A/59/PV.4).

Mr. Elisaia (Samoa): I am taking the floor to convey Samoa's support for the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly. Allow me to elaborate.

For two afternoons now, we have been debating the draft resolution submitted by the group of four, and we have heard some modifications made to it. We have been briefed about the Uniting for Consensus draft resolution, and we have been informed of the African Group's decision, as well as a few variations of the same.

What the promoters of those draft resolutions and proposals have in common is their claim that their particular model will greatly enhance the chances of a least-developed-country island State such as Samoa becoming a non-permanent member of the Security Council sometime in future. While statistically that may be the case, the possibility of such noble intentions being realized will continue to remain elusive, if current regional group voting practices are anything to go by.

I have said informally in the past — and I will say so again now — that if the General Assembly decides, out of the goodness of its heart, to allocate a

seat specifically for the Pacific Islands Forum Group, then, and only then, will Samoa have a fighting chance of serving on the Security Council. But how can we aspire to such a status when we cannot take up lesser challenges within the United Nations because of our resource constraints?

The group of four draft resolution has been labelled divisive. Presumably, States have to take sides during a vote at some stage, even though we know we are not necessarily creating a precedent. The draft, moreover, has been blamed for diverting the attention of the international community, which, it is said, should have been focused closely on other priority items on the United Nations agenda, including preparations for the September summit, notwithstanding the fact that some of the decisions relating to those very vital issues will be taken — or have already been taken in recent months — in forums outside of this Hall.

Some are even cautioning and reminding us that these are sensitive issues and that we must tread with care, and that we therefore need more time to consult and should not set any artificial time frame. Yet we must remind ourselves that Security Council reform has been debated and discussed for more than a decade now. Ironically, when we discuss draft resolutions on other United Nations issues, we usually find ourselves insisting on having action-oriented and time-bound resolutions as the only way forward and the means to gauge and monitor progress.

Samoa's support for the group of four draft resolution is firmly rooted in our unequivocal support for the enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. We remain convinced that an expansion of the Council is both necessary and desirable to mirror present-day realities and to enhance its effectiveness and its legitimacy. Our support for an enlarged Security Council, to include Japan and Germany because of their valuable contributions to the international community, is a matter of record at the United Nations, and we took that stance nine years ago at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. The group of four draft resolution therefore provides what is perhaps the only real avenue within the foreseeable future for Samoa to give effect and expression to its stated position.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): The British Government welcomes this debate on the important issue of Security Council reform. We have supported the expansion of membership of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories for some time. An enlarged and strengthened Security Council will be more representative of the membership of the United Nations and better able to meet the challenges of today's world, and, even with the proposed expansion, the ratio of Security Council to General Assembly members will be no more than it was 60 years ago.

We also want a Council which is more transparent, engages better with other United Nations bodies and consults more effectively with the wider membership. This greater openness will enable the Council better to perform its Charter responsibilities.

The British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, underlined the United Kingdom's longstanding position in his address to the Assembly last September — a position in favour of permanent membership for India, Brazil, Germany and Japan. The United Kingdom also supports permanent membership for Africa.

The United Kingdom will therefore vote in favour of this draft resolution. But it needs to be clear that the United Kingdom has never believed that the extension of the veto beyond the current five permanent members is a necessary feature of expanded permanent membership, nor would it be in the wider interests of the United Nations. The United Kingdom will therefore cast its positive vote with this in mind and will carefully scrutinize the necessary amendments to the United Nations Charter in due course. Reforming the Security Council is an important aspect of adapting the United Nations to face the challenges of the twenty-first century. But it is only one aspect.

The work which you are leading, Mr. President, in preparing substantial and ambitious outcomes for the September summit, is essential. That meeting will be a vital rendezvous for the United Nations. At issue is no less than relaunching a reformed and revitalized United Nations to meet the security, development and human rights needs of this new century.

Indeed, the United Nations should be capable of tackling the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, thus ensuring freedom from want. We should be able to adopt and implement policies to ensure freedom from fear and freedom for all the

world's citizens to live in dignity. We should be able to build on the reform agenda which the Secretary-General is leading; and we should have institutions and organs capable of delivering on those objectives.

In our view, we must redouble our efforts, in support of yours, in the coming days and weeks, to achieve those ambitious and comprehensive outcomes. The United Kingdom will continue to do its utmost to contribute to that goal.

Mr. Beck (Palau): Palau is a sponsor of the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly this afternoon on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Many delegations have eloquently offered their considered views on the importance of the reform of the Security Council, which this draft resolution is designed to accomplish. I would associate my delegation with all of those who have stated that failing to act now will only perpetuate the status quo and thereby result in our neglecting to address the great changes that the world has seen since the formation of this critically important institution.

More geographical representation is simply better, not worse. More representation of developing countries, with their peculiar sensitivity to the links between development and security, is better, not worse. So we associate ourselves with all delegations that have expressed such sentiments in words or in substance.

Please indulge me by taking that universal perspective while I focus briefly on the more parochial interests of Palau. Like virtually all of the island nations whose representatives now sit in this Hall, Palau was not even envisioned as a country or as a participating member of this body when the Security Council was originally formed. Moreover, the people of that time could not even conceive of the unique and terrible environmental and developmental challenges now faced by the many Pacific island Member States. Clearly, the world has changed. I should say, however, that because of Japan's particular understanding as a result of its proximity and commitment to the remote island nations in the Pacific, those States have all benefited greatly from the generosity of a regional partner.

That understanding should become a permanent part of the collective wisdom of the Security Council. Similarly, in every region of the world, there are large countries with developmental and nation-building challenges and regional understanding to add wisdom to the debate. The expansion of the Security Council is designed to capture and use that understanding for the benefit of the world.

Mrs. Asmady (Indonesia): As reform of the United Nations will be accorded priority on the agenda of the General Assembly's High-level Plenary Meeting in September 2005, it is regrettable that the preparations for that historic event face the prospect of being derailed by the controversy over Security Council reform, especially the expansion of its membership.

In this regard, Indonesia would like to reiterate its commitment to and support for a comprehensive approach to United Nations reform. We agree that Security Council reform is important and long overdue. However, we wish to emphasize that there are many other facets of United Nations reform that are, by the same token, critical and that need our equal attention.

From a procedural standpoint, Indonesia believes that the à la carte approach that is currently being taken with a view to reaching a decision regarding the expansion of Security Council membership is clearly unwarranted. It is inconsistent with the consensus to engage in the comprehensive discussion on United Nations reform that Member States agreed to undertake from the beginning of the informal consultations in May. Hence, that approach would undermine the basic objective of comprehensive United Nations reform.

We would also like to express our concern that this hasty approach will sidetrack our leaders in September 2005 and distract them from discussing important and pressing issues of interest and concern to the overwhelming majority of Member States.

In the draft resolution proposed by the group of four, the allocation of additional seats to each region is based merely on geographical distribution, with each region being allocated a certain number of seats. Consequently, the formulation proposed would mean six new permanent and four new non-permanent members.

That geographical approach, in our view, runs the risk of over-representation of some regions and

underrepresentation of others. Although the draft resolution before us does not single out any country in particular, it is obvious that the developing countries have diminished opportunities to be represented proportionally. Thus there is a danger of creating an inequitable Security Council.

Moreover, there is no indication that the criteria for an expanded membership are either specific or appropriate. In this regard, since the initiation of deliberations on Security Council reform more than a decade ago, Indonesia has always maintained that it is important to establish clear and objective criteria when determining candidacies for membership.

In line with the role and authority of the Council, Indonesia would like to emphasize that criteria to determine expanded membership should include, among others, a country's contribution to peacemaking and peacekeeping, as well as a role in regional peace and stability. To that, we must add commitment to cooperation for peace and security in the world, which would encompass support for efforts for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and combating terrorism. Furthermore, a country's attributes in demographic terms and its strong commitment to democracy and human rights merit consideration.

We must also acknowledge that the concept of peace and security has evolved and must recognize important elements of cultures and civilizations. In fact, this concept is being approached and evaluated from the perspective of a potential clash of civilizations. Those immutable factors can no longer be ignored.

It is therefore clear that without an agreement that would take into account such undeniable realities, any formulation to determine new members of the Security Council that is based merely on geographical distribution would lead only to an inequitable Security Council. Thus, it would have the potential to create an unacceptable imbalance in representation, especially from the perspective of cultures and civilizations.

In this context, we would like to stress that, as is already widely known, Asia consists of 56 countries, more than 50 per cent of the world's population inhabit the region. Equally important, it is home to a variety of cultures and civilizations, including Islamic civilizations.

Unfortunately, the current trend is towards underrepresentation for Asia. For that reason, any decision on the expansion of Security Council membership will be inappropriate if the realities prevailing in Asia are not fully taken into account.

Indonesia wishes to emphasize that Security Council expansion must be based on consensus, using appropriate criteria to determine new membership. Otherwise, the process will be determined solely on the basis of geographical allocation and mathematical calculations that will jeopardize the principles of democracy and justice that the United Nations seeks to uphold.

Indonesia hopes that the issue of Security Council expansion will be undertaken in a manner that will not create divisiveness in the United Nations, as that will not be advantageous for any Member State or group of States. My delegation remains hopeful that it will be possible to reach a compromise among the various proposals that have been submitted before our leaders meet in September 2005.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to discuss in depth the critical issue of Security Council reform. It is indeed a matter that will have a great impact on the work of the Security Council and, for that matter, on the United Nations as a whole.

At present, one draft resolution has been tabled and one draft resolution has been circulated, and one more draft resolution will most likely be tabled tomorrow. Without going into the specifics of any of them, I should like to reiterate some of the views I have previously expressed on the important issue of Security Council expansion.

We do not find it absolutely necessary to increase the number of permanent members, because the concept of permanent membership runs counter to the principle of sovereign equality, the very foundation on which the Organization is built. Indeed, we would like to see a more representative Security Council that would better reflect the present membership of the Organization. We feel that we should adequately increase the number of non-permanent seats so as to make the Council more representative.

The criteria for membership should be reasonable and achievable so that a great majority of Member States could seek a seat on the Security Council.

Raising the bar too high would lead to selectivity, which would in reality enable only a small number of Member States to join the Council.

On the other hand, it would be far more desirable if every Member of the Organization could aim for Security Council membership if it believed that there was a role it could play. Is it not better to represent oneself rather than to be represented by someone else? Furthermore, we feel confident that every Member of the Organization would be able to represent its own region, when it comes to that. Having said that, we are prepared to accept flexible and renewable non-permanent membership, which could allow Member States to be re-elected if they and their regions so wished.

It is true that we may have focused too much on this particular dimension of the reform process, perhaps at the expense of others. Yet it is a very important aspect that has a direct bearing on the functioning of the Organization. It took us so long to get to where we are. This is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss.

Mr. Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on Security Council reform. Although the issue we are considering is important, we are convinced that no United Nations reform will be complete without a thorough revitalization of the General Assembly, our main deliberative and representative organ.

I wish to place on record our conviction that the Security Council requires comprehensive reform that would give it transparency, democracy, rotation and effectiveness and would enable it to act on behalf of all Member States in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

In that connection, we welcome this opportunity to comment on the proposals before us, particularly those of the group of four and of the Uniting for Consensus group. Although those proposals have different approaches, there are also important points of convergence that we believe should serve as a basis for seeking consensus solutions that will correspond to the best interests of all Member States. Those points of convergence deserve thorough consideration and reflection.

The implications of any reform of the Security Council are so profound both within the Organization and at the regional and global levels that they require sufficient time for consideration and analysis. As the Secretary-General stated in his report "In larger freedom", "the cause of larger freedom can only be advanced by broad, deep and sustained global cooperation among States" (*A/59/2005, para. 18*).

Most of our consultations on the Security Council have focused on the issue of its expansion. We believe that that is not sufficient, since we have before us the opportunity to be more ambitious, to go beyond adjustments and to agree on a new consensus regarding the form in which the Organization must face today's challenges.

In that connection, we believe that collective security is security of all, by all and for all. We accept the fact that, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, all Member States have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and we recognize that the Council acts on behalf of everyone in carrying out the functions that that responsibility imposes. However, we should focus on refining that delegation so that Council action is a manifestation of all, by all and for all.

We believe that in this collective effort to reform the Security Council, we must not miss any opportunity to limit the use of the veto, including with a view to its eventual elimination. As a first step, we believe it essential to move towards defining limitations on the use of the veto through specific amendments to Article 27, paragraph 3, such as prohibiting the use of the veto in relation to issues such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and massive human rights violations. Our conscience does not allow us to take any other course. As the Secretary-General stated in his report,

> "It cannot be right, when the international community is faced with genocide or massive human rights abuses, for the United Nations to stand by and let them unfold to the end" (*Ibid., para. 134*).

Unless we thoroughly reform the working methods of the Security Council, we will not be carrying out Council reform but a mere expansion, a mere adjustment. The democracy, transparency and accountability of the Council depend mainly on the

working methods. Therefore we need to prepare a draft resolution or an annex to the draft outcome document of the President of the General Assembly that contains clear and precise measures aimed at substantially improving them. We are confident that all parties interested in Security Council reform will contribute to such an effort.

As we stated in the annex to document A/59/856 on the "cascade effect", Costa Rica believes that it is necessary to seriously examine that issue, as any extension of the "cascade effect" could potentially affect the sense of collective ownership which necessarily underlies the United Nations. If we want United Nations action to be a manifestation of all, by all and for all, we must put an end to the "cascade effect" and avoid any initiative that is likely to increase its sphere of application. In that connection, we should adopt adequate safeguards to counteract the "cascade effect" with a view to its eventual elimination.

Turning to the proposals before us, I should like to mention some of our concerns and preoccupations, already expressed previously, in relation to the content of and procedures contained in draft resolution A/59/L.64.

When we examined the proposals seeking to expand Security Council membership in both categories, we were unable to reconcile the creation of new permanent members with the calls for greater democracy and rotation. Permanent status could become a privileged position that would not adequately respond to the universal call for greater democracy, rotation and transparency. Permanent status does not foster accountability for those remaining frozen in their positions. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, Mr. Roberto Tovar Faja, noted in a recent appearance before our parliament:

> "There is something contrary to the nature of Costa Rica here — and I am sure I am speaking for almost everyone. It is of the very substance of our national character that we do not find it natural to vote for an individual or a country *per secula seculorum* ... A State that does not require re-election is, for all practical purposes, a State that is not accountable and that has little to worry about".

Based on such basic principles of democracy and rotation, Costa Rica values proposals that in expanding the Security Council would create new seats subject to periodic elections and to accountability. Here, Costa Rica would entertain the possibility of creating new non-permanent seats with longer terms of office and permitting immediate re-election of outgoing Council members, in the context of reform of Article 23 of the Charter, provided that the necessary guarantees are present to ensure democracy, rotation and due accountability subject to the will of the regional groups and consistent with their criteria. Specifically, we note that a mere two-year term of office is very short in terms of the institutional memory of elected members of the Security Council.

Turning to procedures for increasing the number of permanent members, I wish to comment on two situations that are of particular concern to us and that we feel should be considered in depth before we embark on so uncertain an endeavour. The first concern relates to triggering an endless electoral process, one lacking a limit on the number of rounds of balloting in the General Assembly to select the States that would enjoy the privilege of occupying the proposed new permanent seats. Theoretically, it is possible that all seats could be filled on the first ballot, but we need to be responsible and consider all possible and probable scenarios. In that regard, let me recall that in only 27 of the 59 elections held in the Assembly to fill non-permanent seats were all seats filled in a single round. In the other 32 elections, on average, more than 13 ballots were required. In 1955, there were 36 rounds, and the process ended with an agreement between the parties that they would share the term. In 1959 there were 52 ballots and, again, the process ended with an agreement between the parties to share the term. As recently as 1979, after 155 ballots the candidates withdrew and a third candidate was endorsed for the non-permanent seat in question.

Here, it is important to stress two points. First, in elections to fill non-permanent seats, the number of ballots does not necessarily affect the legitimacy and credibility of the candidates. Elections for permanent membership would be quite different. In our view, if a candidate managed to secure the support required to occupy a permanent seat only after countless ballots — with its support growing vote by vote, round by round — the legitimacy and credibility it needed to occupy a permanent seat would be weakened. Unlike the cases I mentioned, where it was possible to achieve an outcome through the withdrawal of candidates or through an agreement to share the term of office, it will

be possible for a State to be elected to a permanent seat only if it persists and wins through general fatigue or if it withdraws – in which case, we would need to decide what to do about the vacant seat or seats.

Our second concern relates to the possibility of single candidatures from a given region. If there are to be regional candidates, each region must have the opportunity to seek the required consensus. The absence of a regional group endorsement would be inconsistent with the logic and spirit behind the principle of regional representation. Paragraph 2 of the group of four draft resolution provides a window of opportunity of only a single week for other States to submit their candidatures, and paragraph 3 (a) allows for only 12 weeks between the opening of the process and the likely date of the election. That must be corrected in order to ensure the greatest possible participation for every region and to maximize the opportunities for candidatures beyond those of individual States that have not gained endorsements.

I assure you, Mr. President, that my delegation is prepared to continue to play a constructive role in the negotiations with a view to finding a consensus solution that will be satisfactory to all Member States. If in the course of the coming negotiations none of the current proposals gains acceptance as a starting point for an agreed solution, Costa Rica will be ready to offer an alternative model that would move us away from the extremes and lead us out of the impasse on Security Council reform that we now face.

I conclude by quoting the Secretary-General:

> "In an era of global interdependence, the glue of common interest, if properly perceived, should bind all States together ...,
>
> "...
>
> "... working together on the basis of shared principles and priorities — which is, after all, the very reason the United Nations exists". (*A/59/2005, paras. 2 and 19*)

We trust that each and every one of us will have the patience that is sometimes needed in the service of that common interest.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the way in which you have been conducting the work of the General Assembly this year, which is a very significant one for the United Nations. We renew our strong commitment to work towards successful and ambitious decisions on how to adapt the United Nations to the twenty-first century, including with respect to institutional matters.

I will concentrate now on the question of Security Council reform, which we are addressing here today. I can be very brief because the Portuguese position is known to the Assembly. Twelve years ago the Portuguese Government declared itself to be in favour of an enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, so that it would better reflect the world of today through a rebalancing of its representativeness. In the past, on more than one occasion, we have expressed our support for the accession to permanent membership of Germany, Japan, Brazil and India. Portugal is on record as supporting an improvement of the decision-making process and the working methods of the Security Council.

Draft resolution A/59/L.64 is the first concrete proposal in decades to try to advance the attainment of the goal of Security Council reform along the lines advocated by Portugal. Our decision to support and to sponsor the draft resolution was the only option that was coherent and consistent with our previous position on this subject. We believe that, if adopted, the draft resolution will be a major step forward towards a more effective multilateral system with the United Nations at its centre.

Indeed, we see the following merits in the text we have before us. It provides a historic opportunity for the accession of developing countries to permanent membership, thereby putting an end to an imbalance that should no longer exist. It also increases the chances of countries from all regions to be elected to non-permanent seats. It allows for a significant increase in African representation, including through the allocation of two permanent seats to the African continent, which Portugal has been arguing in favour of. It foresees a democratic method for selection to the new permanent seats through elections with secret balloting. It widens the circle of permanent members, allowing for the development of a working culture that is more open and more cooperative with the wider membership of the United Nations. It establishes that the veto will not be exercised by the new permanent members. It puts forward good, concrete proposals on the Council's working methods, providing for a significant and meaningful enhancement of the

transparency, inclusiveness and legitimacy of the Security Council's work, thereby increasing the Council's effectiveness. And it includes a review clause, ensuring that the reforms to be adopted now will be subject to evaluation 15 years after their entry into force.

We thank you, Mr. President, for convening these important meetings of the General Assembly. Since 1994, this body has been discussing Security Council reform, specifically in the framework of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. For many years, there has been wide agreement on the need to adapt the United Nations and its main bodies to an international context that has evolved significantly since the creation of the Organization at the end of the Second World War. Now we have an opportunity to consider, and take action on, a concrete proposal that will lead to an adequate reflection of today's world and to the improvement of the functioning of the United Nations. Let us seize the momentum and make Security Council reform a reality.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Spanish delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening these plenary meetings of the General Assembly to debate the issue of Security Council reform, enabling us to carefully consider the various proposals that have been put before us thus far.

First of all, I would like to reiterate that, as far as the delegation of Spain is concerned, the issue of reforming the Security Council should not be addressed as an isolated component of the process leading up to the summit in September 2005. As we understand it, although this is a matter of enormous importance on which it is necessary that we reach agreement with the greatest possible support from Member States, we must also avoid having this very crucial issue overshadow the other substantive issues that will have to be resolved at the summit, such as attaining the Millennium Development Goals and completing the Organization's reform agenda.

We have before us at least four proposals in various stages of completion aimed at beginning possible reform of the Security Council. First of all, we have the proposal put forth by a number of delegations that is contained in document A/59/L.64. Secondly, we have the proposal of the African Union, which was referred to yesterday at the beginning of the debate by the representative of Algeria. Thirdly, we have the proposal circulated on 8 July by the countries making up the Uniting for Consensus group. Lastly, an important delegation has made specific suggestions for Security Council reform that we believe also merit serious consideration.

The fundamental thrust of the Uniting for Consensus proposal entails increasing the number of elected Council members, including making re-election possible. That proposal is based on three pillars: equality, responsibility and unity. It stresses equality in that because small and medium-sized States, which make up the vast majority of Members of the Organization, would have greatly enhanced opportunities to have access to the Security Council and to influence it on the basis of the principle of the sovereign equality of States. It offers responsibility, because the addition of new permanent seats in the Council would not lead to proper accountability to all Member States: we believe that the only way to enhance the accountability of Council members is through the renewal by means of elections — and, as appropriate, periodic re-elections — by the General Assembly. Lastly, the proposal stresses unity, because such an important decision should not be taken in a manner that further divides the Organization; it should be taken through the establishment of broad consensus on which to build the future of the United Nations.

We think that the Uniting for Consensus proposal has certain features that might be found satisfactory by a vast majority of the Members of the Organization. First of all, it is a democratic proposal, as the 20 non-permanent members of the Council would be elected in an open and transparent fashion by the General Assembly, thereby fully respecting the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Secondly, the proposal is adaptable, as it would make it possible to take into account the emergence of new geopolitical realities through the process of potential re-election. Thirdly, it is flexible, as each regional group could play a decisive role with regard to the conditions and modalities for its members' participation, so that the Security Council could adapt to the changing realities in every region or subregion.

We have studied draft resolution A/59/L.64 very carefully, submitted by the group of four countries and sponsored by a total of 29 delegations. We know that there are countries that believe that, owing to their

important contributions to the Organization, they should be represented more frequently on the Security Council because of the current vast differences between being a permanent member of the Council and being a State obliged to vie for non-permanent membership for a mere two-year term without the possibility of immediate re-election. Nevertheless, we believe that we should avoid trying to correct this anomaly with another. There are in fact already too many differences between permanent and non-permanent Council membership to further exacerbate that imbalance.

Various speakers in this debate have already pointed out the drawbacks of the group of four proposal, as well as of the approach suggested for carrying it out. I would like to focus on just a few of those issues.

First of all, the proposal submitted by the group of four envisions drastically altering the Security Council's composition as regards the proportion of permanent to non-permanent members, making that proportion almost equal. Doing that would make it almost impossible for the nearly 80 States that have not been members of the Security Council in past decades to have access to membership, as 180 Member States would be competing for just 14 non-permanent Council seats.

Secondly, creating new permanent seats would in practice not help to improve the participation of non-members in the Council's work. There is no better way to take part in the work of the Council than to have a real chance to join it as a non-permanent member at some point. There is no better recipe to improve accountability than the election or re-election of a candidate that is periodically subjected to the sovereign will of all Member States. In that regard, we would like to note that the issue of improving the Council's working methods should be addressed in greater depth on the basis both of the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group and of other interesting contributions by various delegations, among which I would like to highlight the document circulated by Switzerland.

Thirdly, resolution 59/291 calls upon us to spare no effort to ensure that we reach the broadest possible agreement among Member States on all major issues relating to the summit to be held on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization. We have on several occasions debated what "broadest possible agreement" means, given that it is foreseeable that unanimous consensus among Member States will be extremely difficult to achieve. In that regard, I would like to recall that when the Assembly adopted resolution 1991 (XVIII), on reforming the Security Council, in December 1963, the text had the support of 97 Member States, with 11 votes against and 4 abstentions. In other words, by a broad margin, the decision to increase the number of Council members from 11 to 15 had the support of about 87 per cent of the States that were then Members of the United Nations. At the same time, we should also not forget that that reform was of lesser scope than the one being proposed by the group of four, as it did not seek to create new permanent members.

Looking soberly at the current situation, we must acknowledge that none of the proposals now before us enjoys the minimum support required for Charter reform, namely, that of two thirds of Member States — much less coming anywhere near that 87 per cent of the membership of the Organization, which would lend unquestionable legitimacy to a decision of such far-reaching importance for the future of the United Nations.

As I have mentioned, this is the first time that plenary meetings of the General Assembly have been convened to consider a formally introduced draft resolution on this subject — apart from other proposals that have been circulated informally. That being the case, we do not believe it would be prudent to move hastily to a vote that can predictably lead to a very serious rift among Member States and that will have unforeseeable and real consequences for the next steps in the process of reforming the Organization as a whole.

We therefore believe that the President of the General Assembly should continue to hold consultations with the groups sponsoring the various proposals, with a view to reaching the broadest possible agreement on reform of the Security Council, thus avoiding division in the Organization. With a view to the future broad agreement to which we clearly all aspire, those consultations should be based on a set of basic guidelines for Security Council reform that could serve as a framework, incorporating the positions that, in spite of everything else, are common to the various proposals that have been put forth.

In short, this is not about unnecessarily delaying the taking of decisions. What we all want is for common sense and restraint to prevail so that we can

reach the broadest agreement possible as quickly as we can and so that, once the Security Council is reformed, it will be more efficient, transparent and democratic, to the benefit of the purposes of the Charter and of the entire membership of the Organization.

Mr. Sen (India): We congratulate you, Mr. President, on convening these historic plenary meetings under agenda item 53. You have led us with honour and distinction during the fifty-ninth session, and we are confident that, as we near its conclusion, we will achieve fruitful and productive outcomes under your able leadership. I would also like to convey my apologies, for I had not intended to speak in this debate. I will therefore speak extemporaneously for much of my statement, and it will not be possible to distribute copies of my text.

This is not just another plenary debate. The group of four has introduced a historic draft resolution that seeks to reform the Security Council in such a manner and through such a process as to revitalize the General Assembly through praxis and not mere promises, and through action and not mere aspiration. The General Assembly cannot be revitalized through wishing and desiring it, but only through hard thought and harder exercise of will.

The critics of the draft resolution — and there are not many — have alleged that we have introduced the proposal in haste, that we have not been inclusive in our approach and that a decision on the matter should be taken only on the basis of consensus. The debate on Security Council reform has been taking place for over 12 years now, and the issues are widely known. Those discussions have intensified over the past year. In the past six months, there have been particularly intense consultations processes. The substance of the proposal has been discussed by the group of four with every group and Member State in the United Nations, both in New York and in capitals. Not only is the draft resolution the culmination of discussions that have taken place for well over a decade, but it is the consequence of a broad-based consultation process that takes on board the concerns and views of all.

And finally, in moving ahead and calling for action, we are heeding the advice of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has stated, not without reason, that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council and that, as a consequence, Member States should take a decision on this issue before September 2005.

Likewise, the undue emphasis on consensus only serves to confuse and obfuscate the issue. By adopting resolution 53/30, the General Assembly quite clearly determined that the requirement for a decision on this question is two thirds of the membership. To now artificially raise the bar — as some have sought to do, including very recently — is quite clearly arbitrary and self-serving.

The critics of the proposal of the group of four would do well to remember that the genesis of that proposal was the report of the High-level Panel and Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the Secretary-General's own report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). It is currently the only proposal on the table — a proposal that takes into account the interests of all groups and regions, large and small, within the United Nations system and that ensures a win-win outcome for every Member State. The other proposals either are for preserving the status quo or, even if they acknowledge merit in the group-of-four logic favouring an expansion in both categories, seek to achieve expansion on a narrow and restricted basis, without elaborating on either intent or content.

Most important, the proposal of the group of four seeks to change the structure of the Security Council — a structure that is outdated and has hitherto militated against the interests of the developing countries, which constitute the majority of the Member States of the Organization. And it is only by changing its structure and breaking the charmed circle of permanent members that it will be possible to change the policies and political culture of the Security Council.

We are not trying to carve into stone reform that is static. On the contrary, through the inclusion of the review clause, new permanent members would be held accountable for their performance. Should that be found inadequate in the opinion of the wider membership, the situation would be entirely subject to change. In other words, the General Assembly, which we are seeking to revitalize, would continue to be the master of the reform process being undertaken.

It has often been argued that Security Council reform will overshadow some of the other critical issues set out in the Secretary-General's report. That is simply contradicted by the facts. We did not introduce the draft resolution during the discussions on the outcome document, and, like other delegations, we engaged intensively in the debate. The issue of

development, far from being diluted, has been the centre of focus and will remain so. We are prepared to travel the entire distance on that vital issue, in solidarity with developing countries.

The model and the process of Security Council reform that we are proposing would exercise a beneficial influence on overall reform by strengthening the General Assembly and by removing — or at least reducing — concerns about unjust legislation or the unfair use of human rights. Alternative models do not provide that synergy. We are as wary of artificial deferrals as others may be of artificial deadlines.

I would also like to deal with some of the arguments that were put forward yesterday and especially today. Our critics wish to square the circle in traditional mathematics: they wish to increase the Security Council's efficiency and authority and to improve its working methods, but without breaking the charmed circle of the permanent five. Efficiency is not an arithmetical or managerial concept; it is a function of optimal and just decisions. Authority comes from wide acceptability of decisions perceived to be fair and just. These cannot be achieved without the contribution of new permanent members. And how does one improve working methods without mandating new permanent members to do so and holding them accountable if they do not?

To do something decisively that has been carefully thought out and discussed is considered a sign of immaturity, but that is characteristic of youth impatient for change. To postpone and do nothing is perhaps a sign of maturity, but it is equally a sign of old age and decrepitude. In that sense, maturity would also ensure consensus.

We are equally unswerving in supporting the representation of African countries; the only difference is that we do not swerve when it comes to their permanent membership.

Our critics say that since the reform that we are proposing is likely to be vetoed by some of the permanent five, it is a fruitless dead end. We believe that a decision taken thrice by the General Assembly through a two-thirds majority cannot be politically vetoed. It is not a dead end, but a barrier that has to be broken through so that, from the dead end that it has almost reached, the General Assembly is resurrected and revitalized as the most powerful universal body of the United Nations. Our critics add that their reform model is better because it would be ratified by the permanent five. Precisely for that reason, it would be worse for the General Assembly.

In a discussion with friends from the African Union a few weeks back, I quoted a nineteenth-century thinker who favoured radical reform — reform that is permitted by reason and not permitted by the police. Our critics offer us reform that is permitted by the police and not permitted by reason. Their logic is incomprehensible. President Truman spoke of the noble purposes of the United Nations. But as the records of the Potsdam Conference show, he also inaugurated the cold war. No wonder, therefore, that it is our critics who ultimately praise Caesar. We continue to bury him.

It is quite clear that our critics therefore continue to support the dominance of the current power structure. They speak of the ethics of the United Nations and of national elections, on which the group-of-four countries hardly require any lessons. According to those critics, permanent members with the veto, permanent members without the veto and non-permanent members would constitute three unmanageable and in fact unequal tiers, but the continued dominance of the permanent five and the proposed 20 non-permanent members would form one happy, equal family.

According to that logic, the small States that co-sponsored our resolution do not know their own interests. A small State elected once in 40 years is represented, but a small State that benefits from increased policy and political space and that participates every day in the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council does not get any representation or benefit at all, according to their logic. An election after which the record of non-permanent members is not examined is accountability, but a stringent review holding new permanent members accountable is lack of accountability.

Most astonishing of all is the complete reinterpretation of the African Union (AU) summit. Not providing for one more non-permanent seat makes the proposal of the group of four totally incompatible with AU positions, but denying both permanent seats to the AU makes the Uniting for Consensus proposal fully compatible. The group of four is saying that the question of the veto should be discussed after 15 years; the AU is saying that it should be discussed now. But our critics say that the AU is not really committed to the veto at all — that it does not really want the veto,

but something entirely different. That, surely, is to reinterpret the Ezulwini Consensus and the AU summit and to claim to know the minds of the African Union better than the Union itself.

Moreover, if continued presence is proposed — I am not very good at citing statistics, and probably not as good at mathematics as the members of Uniting for Consensus — then the arithmetical effect on other seats would be much worse, even arithmetically, than that of the proposal of the group of four. One need not reiterate that, in any case, the political effect would be much worse, because there would not be increased policy or political space, and there would not be participation in the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council.

One of the Uniting for Consensus countries also "warned" the group of four. We are at a loss to know whether that was a friendly indication of a danger to be avoided or a threat to be heeded. Anyway, that completely unselfish and fruitful travesty of logic is dressed up as a total absence of national ambition and as total concern for the welfare of the general membership.

One of the five permanent members has also said that it would like there to be 20 or 20-plus members of the Security Council. I merely wanted to remark on the striking arithmetical coincidence.

It was said also that the status of the permanent five should not be diluted. I would have imagined that, surely, that is the whole point — that we have to dilute the status of the permanent five through the creation of new permanent seats in order to break the charmed circle and reach decisions acceptable to the broad majority of the general membership.

Another permanent member has also said that this would be divisive — and this has been said by the Uniting for Consensus group as well — that there should be, in fact, a broad-based agreement. Now, how does one find out whether there is a broad-based agreement? Because, surely, a broad-based agreement is not a figment of the imagination. It has to be determined, through a process of voting, whether or not there is a broad-based agreement.

It was also mentioned that such decisions require the support of two thirds of the Assembly. We entirely agree with this. That is exactly what we are proposing — that a similar decision on Charter change, on changing the structure of the Security Council, should require the support of two thirds of the general membership of the United Nations.

It was said that this should be part of a package, but the point is, as the Secretary-General has advised us, that the package does not imply that decisions should not be taken by voting if there is no consensus, or should not be taken early. In fact, the clear advice is that decisions on this vital issue should be taken early, precisely in order to use the synergy, to which I referred, with the other aspects of Security Council reform.

It was also said that there should be effectiveness, but, again, as I have argued earlier, effectiveness is not an arithmetical constant. It is, I repeat, a question of the optimality of the decisions to which developing countries and others contribute and their acceptability. That is what makes the body effective — not arithmetic, not management.

Similarly, it has been said that States that have the capacity should be there. Now who is to judge whether a State has the capacity? Surely it is the General Assembly. Who else is going to judge whether a State has the capacity? In any case, if the criteria that are being proposed had been adopted in 1945, half the membership of the permanent five would not be there.

In conclusion, I think that a permanent member said that this draft resolution would not strengthen the United Nations and therefore urged the General Assembly to oppose it and to vote against it. The General Assembly has to make up its mind. Does it want to revitalize itself? Because, if it does, the choice is very clear: it should, in fact, vote, and not go by consensus. It should take a vote, and it should vote in favour of the group of four's draft resolution.

Finally, I will return to the point that I began with — the whole issue of the group of four hurtling down the road with this draft resolution in undue haste. Quite clearly, the facts, as I have shown, prove otherwise. We have painstakingly worked with Member States and regional groups on a reform package that we believe will serve the interests of all. We have respected the wishes of the African Union and of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which had urged us to submit our draft resolution after the summits in Libya and Saint Lucia. We will continue to negotiate and engage with those groups, tomorrow and in the coming days — on Saturday and on Sunday — in keeping with the spirit of the Brussels statement and

the London Declaration, and with the other Member States and other regional groupings.

Even as we do so, we appeal to them — to our brothers in the African Union and CARICOM — for their support and understanding, in our joint endeavour to give the developing countries the due and rightful place in the highest echelons of decision-making in the United Nations that has hitherto been denied to them. We would also appeal to all Member States to seize this rare opportunity to usher in reform and change, which we are convinced are needed — and today's statements have convinced me even more — if the United Nations is to represent an effective and genuine multilateralism in the truest sense of the term.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Algeria, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Given the lateness of the hour, I will take far less than the 10 minutes you have given me.

The representative of Germany has lately taken an inappropriate stance with respect to Algeria's position. He seems to be the only not to understand it, and he seems to want to create confusion in that respect. I shall therefore reiterate what I said yesterday in this Hall. I hope that, after these explanations, the representative of Germany will no longer have any questions.

As the representative of Germany is aware, Algeria played a major role in the initiating, drafting and adoption, at the Sirte summit, of an African draft resolution, sponsored by all African States, which will be officially submitted tomorrow. That draft resolution is not, apparently, to the taste of the representative of Germany, who would have liked Africa to support the draft resolution put forward by the group of four, even if it meant dividing itself. But not only was Africa not divided; it surprised the rest of the world by adopting a common position and by coming here, unified, to defend it within the United Nations. That African draft is our draft, and, as I said yesterday, we cannot support any other draft — only this one.

I hope that this clarification will answer once and for all any questions that the representative of Germany may have.

My delegation considers that the draft resolution submitted by the group of four is absolutely unacceptable and incompatible with the legitimate interests and aspirations of Africa, as put forward at Ezulwini and confirmed at Sirte. Algeria — unlike certain countries, which are ready to make any and all concessions simply to realize an ambition bordering on obsession — is not prepared to settle for cut-rate — I repeat, cut-rate — permanent seats.

For that reason, my delegation will vote against the draft resolution submitted by the group of four if it is put to the vote and in turn calls on all States — African States in particular — to vote against that text.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker. I think that we must continue our consultations on this question. I will inform the Assembly as soon as possible as to how we will proceed next.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of consideration of agenda item 53.

Programme of work

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to inform members that the General Assembly will hold a plenary meeting on Thursday, 14 July 2005, in the afternoon, to resume consideration of the following agenda items: sub-item (g) of agenda item 56, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1; sub-item (b) of agenda item 85, "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.63; sub-item (b) of agenda item 105, "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.65; and agenda item 113, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.66.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.113

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

113rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 14 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 56 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 56 and its sub-items (a) through (t) at its 38th through 40th plenary meetings, on 21 and 22 October 2004. In connection with sub-item (g), the Assembly has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/59/L.16/Rev.1.

Mr. Ikoube (Congo) (*spoke in French*): It is my honour to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1, under sub-item (g) of agenda item 56, on behalf of the following 11 countries members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS): Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

As the President recalled, the General Assembly has already had an opportunity to consider the agenda item concerning cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. At that time action on the draft resolution was postponed in order to allow for greater coordination with certain interested partners and so that we could take account of geopolitical and security developments under way in the Central African subregion.

The text that I am introducing today is little different from that of resolutions adopted in previous years. The emphasis today is on the need for sustained efforts on the part of the Secretary-General and the entire international community within the framework of assistance to subregional institutions.

Once again, we welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to dispatch, in June 2003, at the request of the Security Council, a multidisciplinary assessment mission to Central Africa to determine how best to ensure a comprehensive, resolute and coordinated approach to problems relating to peace, security and development in the subregion. Emphasis is also placed on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the mission's report, at a time when Central Africa has more favourable prospects for peace and security.

The post-conflict situation in most of the countries of the region requires increased efforts, particularly within the framework of implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. We therefore call upon the international community to provide substantive assistance so as to contribute to the consolidation of the various peace operations under way in Central Africa. As in previous

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years, the States of ECCAS would like the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The President (*spoke in French*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 59/310).

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 56?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 56.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: request for the reallocation of sub-item (b) of agenda item 85

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting on 17 September 2004, the General Assembly decided to allocate sub-item (b) of agenda item 85 to the Second Committee under heading B, "Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences".

Members will also recall that sub-item (b) of agenda item 85 remained open for consideration during the fifty-ninth session.

In order for the General Assembly to proceed expeditiously with the consideration of the draft resolution issued as document A/59/L.63 under the sub-item, may I take it that the General Assembly wishes to consider sub-item (b) of agenda item 85 directly in plenary meeting under heading B, "Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences"?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): May I fu take it that the Assembly agrees to pro immediately to the consideration of sub-item (agenda item 85?

As there is no objection, we shall pro accordingly.

Agenda item 85 (*continued*)

Sustainable Development

(b) Further implementation of the Programme Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Note by the Secretary-General (A/59/872)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.63)

The President (*spoke in French*): In connec with this item, the General Assembly has before note by the Secretary-General circulated in docu A/59/872, transmitting the report of the Internat Meeting to Review the Implementation of Programme of Action for the Sustainable Develop of Small Island Developing States.

I give the floor to the representative of Jamai introduce draft resolution A/59/L.63.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): On behalf of the S members of the Group of 77 and China, I have honour this afternoon to introduce for the consider of the General Assembly the draft resolution ent "International Meeting to Review the Implement of the Programme of Action for the Sustain Development of Small Island Developing Sta which has been issued as document A/59/L.63. following countries have added their names to the of sponsors: Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finl Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Samoa, Solomon Isla Turkey and Tuvalu.

The draft resolution addresses the outcome o International Meeting held in Mauritius from 1 14 January 2005, which had as its principal foc review of the implementation of the Barb Programme of Action for the Sustainable Develop of Small Island Developing States. The resolution, in paragraph 2, endorses the outcome o International Meeting, as embodied in the Maut Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Fu

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Their adoption was the culmination of months of extensive preparation and intensive negotiations among delegations at the International Meeting.

The draft resolution focuses special attention on implementation, calls for concrete measures to fulfil agreed commitments and urges all parties, Governments and international agencies towards effective action. That is the principal theme of paragraphs 4, 5 and 6. In paragraph 7, the draft recommends that the outcomes of the meeting be taken into consideration at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, to be held from 14 to 16 September 2005, and in its preparatory process.

Also of particular importance is the role of the Secretariat in advancing coordinated and coherent implementation. Accordingly, paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11 call for particular measures to be taken by the Secretary-General and by agencies within the international system.

The sponsors take this opportunity to express their deep appreciation to the Government and the people of Mauritius for hosting the International Meeting and for making all the necessary arrangements for reaching a successful outcome.

The constructive proposals in the draft resolution merit the support of the international community. The widespread consultations allowed for the views and interests of the United Nations membership to be accommodated in a consensus text. On that basis, we invite the General Assembly to give favourable consideration to the draft resolution, and we express the hope that it will meet with the unanimous approval of the Assembly.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). We would like to add our voice to that of the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China.

We commend to the General Assembly draft resolution A/59/L.63, endorsing the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting, namely, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, adopted at the International Meeting. I would also like to thank all the countries that sponsored the draft resolution.

The Mauritius International Meeting, held from 10 to 14 January 2005 — the first major United Nations international conference that took place after the catastrophic tsunami of 26 December 2004 — saw the participation of almost 2,000 delegates, including 18 Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Prime Ministers, some 60 other ministers, and representatives of United Nations agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Your own presence, Mr. President, and that of the Secretary-General at the International Meeting — which were very highly appreciated and which enhanced the profile of the Meeting — attested to the prime importance you both attach to the cause of small island developing States.

The Mauritius International Meeting was the culmination of more than a decade of efforts by small island developing States and by our partners in the international community to elaborate a framework for the sustainable development of small island developing States. The 10-year review of the Barbados Programme of Action provided us with an opportunity to look back at our efforts towards the sustainable development of our countries with the support of our development partners. For AOSIS, the preparatory process started more than two years ago and culminated in the January 2004 inter-regional ministerial meeting of small island developing States, held in the Bahamas, from which the small island developing States' draft strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action emanated.

The review highlighted the causes of poor implementation: a dearth of resources, poor human and institutional capacity, a lack of technology transfer and, in some cases, the absence of a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development. In addition, new and emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, globalization and the erosion of trade preferences traditionally enjoyed by small island developing States, as well as the new emphasis on security, have further slowed implementation efforts.

Good progress in the negotiations on the draft strategy document was made here in New York at United Nations Headquarters and in the course of the three informal rounds of consultations, as well as during the two days of pre-meeting sessions in Mauritius. We wish to express our deepest appreciation

to our partners for their flexibility and understanding during the negotiating process. I would also like to thank all the Friends of the Host of the International Meeting and other friendly countries for their important contributions to the success of the Mauritius Meeting.

We would like to place on record our special thanks and gratitude to the former Permanent Representative of New Zealand, His Excellency Ambassador Don MacKay, for his outstanding role as the facilitator of the negotiating process. His leadership, vision and excellent diplomatic skills proved to be critical in reaching the very successful final outcome. Our thanks go also to the Secretary-General of the International Meeting, His Excellency Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and to all the staff of the United Nations Secretariat, in particular those in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and its Small Island Developing States Unit. I would also like to thank most sincerely all the countries that contributed to the Small Island Developing States Trust Fund. A word of thanks goes also to Mr. Mark Ramsden, Counsellor in the Permanent Mission of New Zealand, who kindly facilitated the reaching of consensus on the present resolution.

Allow me to highlight some essential aspects of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation. The Strategy provides the blueprint for action-oriented, concrete and practical measures to address the concerns of small island developing States as identified in the Barbados Programme of Action, as well as new and emerging issues. The Mauritius International Meeting brought the Barbados Programme closer to gaining a broader perspective on the sustainable development of small island developing States and to current funding priorities, and forged links with the review of the Millennium Declaration. The Mauritius Strategy also combines the relevant aspects of the Millennium Development Goals with the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States.

It is in that context that, in the informal consultations convened by the President of the General Assembly in relation to the September 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting, we have repeatedly stressed the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting and the fact that they need to be taken into consideration in the September 2005 outcome document. We have also pointed out that the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation constitutes an important input in the area of sustainable development.

The Mauritius Strategy also notes that small island developing States have implemented the Barbados Programme of Action principally through utilization of their own resources and that their efforts have been pursued within financial constraints, including an overall decline of official development assistance to small island developing States. The Strategy covers all the sectoral chapters of the Barbados Programme of Action and also addresses new and emerging issues. It clearly identifies areas in which small island developing States will require the support of the international community.

The Mauritius Strategy calls, inter alia, for a substantial increase in the flow of financial and other relevant resources, both public and private, and ensuring their effective use; improved trade opportunities; access to and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on a concessional or preferential basis, as mutually agreed; support in the area of education and awareness-raising; capacity-building; and support for national country-driven and country-owned strategies for sustainable development, including poverty reduction and resilience-building.

We appeal to our partners and to all donor institutions to assist small island developing States in enhancing their ability to implement the Mauritius Strategy.

The Alliance of Small Island States also welcomes the decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its thirteenth session, to devote one day of the review sessions of the Commission to the review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy as well as any new developments on sustainable development efforts in small island States. This is indeed a step in the right direction.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his March 2005 report, the adverse effects of climate change, sea-level rise and associated phenomena such as the increase in intensity and frequency of extreme weather events threatens the sustainable development, the livelihoods of the people and the very existence of some States.

As we speak, a severe hurricane is once again pounding Grenada, causing severe damage. As the Assembly will recall, the AOSIS summit held in the margins of the Mauritius International Meeting has called for the establishment and development of an all-hazard early-warning system as a priority in all the regions of the world and has also called for international support in that regard. We welcome progress in that area, but it is equally important that our vulnerable group of countries receive urgent assistance to build resilience to such adversities.

The Mauritius Strategy will necessitate a clear road map for quick and practical actions to address the unique challenge facing the sustainable development of small island developing States and to address their economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities. We believe also that the Small Island Developing States Unit within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSnet) should be sustainably staffed and appropriately reinforced so that it can effectively service this important group of countries.

We have high expectations of the plan to be devised by the Secretary-General for DESA, and we look forward to clear recommendations for actions, to be taken in a coherent and coordinated manner, involving all the relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other stakeholders. In that regard, the Alliance of Small Island States appreciates the initiative taken by some United Nations agencies to mainstream the small island developing States and the Mauritius Strategy in their work programmes and to establish focal points for small island developing States within their respective secretariats.

The AOSIS member States will work closely at the national and regional levels with DESA for the convening of the regional meetings in 2005 and 2006. Once again, we appeal to the donor community to contribute to the voluntary Trust Fund for Small Island Developing States to enable the effective participation of the small island developing States in those regional meetings.

Mauritius was indeed honoured to have had the opportunity to host the International Meeting on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and we look forward to the adoption today of the draft resolution endorsing the Mauritius outcome by consensus.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): New Zealand looks forward to the adoption of this draft resolution, which we trust will add impetus to the fulfilment of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation within the United Nations system.

New Zealand remains committed to the Mauritius Strategy. We are pleased to see that its importance has been recognized, Mr. President, in your draft outcome for the September summit. We want to see the summit outcome focus on all groups of vulnerable countries and those unlikely to meet the Millennium Development Goals, including small island developing States.

New Zealand has consistently supported the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Unit within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. As a donor that has contributed extra-budgetary resources to fund its activities, we consider it important that the Secretary-General allocate sufficient resources to enable the Unit to carry out its mandated functions. We would like to see the Unit's permanent staffing numbers raised to facilitate this. As the draft resolution notes, this should be done within existing resources; from New Zealand's point of view, there is scope to reduce duplication in the system. That could help us to free up resources that might then be reallocated to the Small Island Developing States Unit.

Ms. Walpole (United Kingdom): I will preface my statement with a short clarification. I am speaking now as a representative of the United Kingdom, not of the European Union.

I now have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries Iceland and Norway members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to take this opportunity warmly to welcome the formal endorsement by the General Assembly of the Mauritius

Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The European Union believes that these documents provide an important and substantial blueprint for future international support for, and collaboration with, the small island developing States. We look forward to a continuing close coordination with the small island developing States in follow-up to the decisions taken in Mauritius.

Those of us who have been involved in the past months in the small island developing States process are keenly aware that many of the issues addressed in the Mauritius Strategy are those same important issues which the United Nations membership is now considering in the context of the upcoming Millennium review summit. We remain committed to ensuring that the concerns of small island developing States are appropriately addressed at the forthcoming summit.

The European Union would also like to take this opportunity to express its warmest appreciation of, and thanks for, the central role played by the Government of Mauritius in piloting us through extensive preparations for the Mauritius International Meeting and for having so splendidly hosted that Meeting last January.

Mrs. Núñez de Odremán (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is prepared to endorse draft resolution A/59/L.63, which is before us for adoption, with a deep sense of solidarity with small island developing States.

Our delegation wishes to state that it dissociates itself from the content of operative paragraph 2 of the draft because of certain elements included in the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation. Let me explain.

Venezuela is not a State party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and its provisions are not applicable to it under customary international law, apart from those expressly recognized by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and those it might in future recognize under its domestic laws. In view of that, my delegation has dissociated itself from the content of subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 27 of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation. We reaffirm that position in connection with the adoption of draft resolution A/59/L.63.

The President (*spoke in French*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.63. I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru: In connection with draft resolution A/59/L.63, I should like to inform representatives that in response to paragraph 8 of the draft resolution it expected that consideration by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session of a report to be prepared, articulating a plan for the coordinated and coherent implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation by the relevant United Nations bodies, would serve as an occasion to discuss and define programmatic implications of the implementation of the Programme of Action, and in that regard to clarify the scale of resources required to support it. On that understanding, paragraph 8 will have no programme budget implications for the current budget.

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs anticipates that, in response to paragraph 9 of the draft resolution, three regional meetings will be held, only in 2005, one each in the Caribbean region; the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and the South China Sea region; and the Pacific region. It is estimated that $125,200 will be required for the holding of the three regional meetings of small island developing States in 2005. The Secretariat will assess all existing extrabudgetary resources contributed to finance activities in support of the programme of work on small island developing States and will seek additional contributions if need be.

With a view to facilitating the full and effective implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as called for in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution, the Secretariat will meet additional requirements within existing resources, including by internal redeployment of resources.

In summary, draft resolution A/59/L.63, if adopted, would have no programme budget implications for the 2004-2005 regular budget.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/59/L.63, entitled "International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the

Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

Before we take action on draft resolution A/59/L.63, I wish to announce that the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution since its submission: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Turkey, Tuvalu and the United Kingdom.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.63?

Draft resolution A/59/L.63 was adopted (resolution 59/311).

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 85 and of agenda item 85 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 105 (*continued*)

Human rights questions

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Draft resolution (A/59/L.65)

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that the Assembly dedicated its 70th plenary meeting, held on 10 December 2004, to a review of the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, under this sub-item.

I give the floor to the representative of Australia to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.65.

Mr. Choi (Australia): The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, in article 26, that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Vienna World Conference on Human Rights also made it clear that human rights education is vital for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. Over the past decade, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions that have expressed a consensus view that human rights education makes a fundamental contribution to the full realization of human rights and to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses.

On 10 December 2004, the General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education in recognition of the need for a continuing international framework for human rights education. The Programme, which incorporates targeted and time-limited phases, will lend itself to a more structured approach to international coordination of human rights education, including more responsive management and coordination. It will facilitate the work of those already engaged in human rights education and will encourage others to develop appropriate programmes.

Unfortunately, we were unable to adopt the corresponding draft plan of action for human rights education on 10 December last year. But now that States have had ample opportunity to comment on and review the draft plan, and given that the first stage of the World Programme, focusing on primary and secondary school systems, has already been proclaimed, it is now time to act.

Against that background, it is my pleasure to introduce the draft resolution entitled "World Programme for Human Rights Education", contained in document A/59/L.65. The text follows up on the General Assembly's resolution on human rights education, resolution 59/113 A of 10 December 2004, and the corresponding resolution of the Commission on Human Rights; by this draft resolution, the Assembly would adopt the revised draft plan of action for the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

General Assembly resolutions on human rights education have traditionally had strong support from the international community, reflecting the importance that is attached to having an appropriate international framework for human rights education. It is our firm hope and expectation that this draft resolution will be adopted with broad support from the General Assembly.

Before I conclude, I would like to announce the following additional sponsors: Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark,

Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Uruguay.

The President (*spoke in French*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.65.

I give the floor to the representative of India, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taking on the draft resolution. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Tomar (India): I am taking the floor to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education, contained in document A/59/L.65.

My delegation wishes to thank the delegation of the main sponsor, Australia, for its efforts in submitting the draft resolution. The draft resolution will ensure that the work started in the first Decade on Human Rights Education will gather further momentum in the coming decade.

The 10 December 2004 debate in the General Assembly on human rights education clearly brought out the importance that Member States are increasingly attaching to this aspect of the promotion of human rights. In India, the idea of human rights is embodied in the Constitution, which was adopted in 1950, soon after India's independence. The Constitution promotes and protects the human rights of the people of India. Thus far, human rights education has been integrated into diverse subjects at different stages of education through India's education policy. A National Action Plan for Human Rights Education was drawn up in cooperation with the National Human Rights Commission and is being implemented. India is fully committed to promoting human rights education, and has taken several measures towards that end.

Under paragraph 1 of A/59/L.65, the General Assembly would adopt the revised draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, as c in the annex to the Secretary-General (A/59/525/Rev.1).

The draft plan provides for the setting United Nations inter-agency coordination co composed of representatives from the Offic United Nations High Commissioner for Human the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Organization, UNICEF, the United Development Programme and other international agencies, including the World our view, a prior intergovernmental agreem details of the role, functioning and mandate committee is required, and we would have pre discuss this aspect further during the sixtieth s the General Assembly. Since that has not possible, we wish to make clear that we envisage or accept any monitoring or ev mandate of a United Nations inter-agency coo committee, particularly with reference to parag and 51 of the draft plan of action.

We are also concerned that neither t resolution nor the draft plan of action provide additional funding for implementation, partic developing countries. The Vienna Declarat Programme of Action noted that resource co and institutional inadequacies might imp immediate realization of the objectives Strengthened international cooperation for eradication remains a key ingredient for the p and protection of human rights, and for the p of human rights education.

The President (*spoke in French*): We ha the only speaker in explanation of positio action is taken on the draft resolution before u

The Assembly will now take a decision resolution A/59/L.65, entitled "World Progra Human Rights Education".

Since the publication of draft re Kazakhstan has joined the list of sponsors.

May I take it that the Assembly decides draft resolution A/59/L.65?

Draft resolution A/59/L.65 was (resolution 59/312).

The President (*spoke in French*): I now floor to the representative of the Bolivarian

of Venezuela, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the draft resolution just adopted. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Núñez de Odremán (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supported draft resolution A/59/L.65. We would like to state for the record, however, that we are already in the process of implementing national plans in the area of human rights education. The World Programme for Human Rights Education, as adopted through the present resolution, is thus fully compatible and in harmony with our national programmes.

Likewise, with regard to paragraph 5 of the resolution, the plans of action undertaken by non-governmental organizations in our country are, and should be, subject to the requirements and priorities set out in our country's national plans.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 105 and of agenda item 105 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation items: request for the reallocation of agenda item 113

The President (*spoke in French*): Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2004, the General Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 113 to the Fifth Committee under heading 1, "Organizational, administrative and other matters".

Members will also recall that agenda item 113 remained open for consideration during the fifty-ninth session.

I would like to draw members' attention to a letter dated 20 June 2005 from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions addressed to the President of the General Assembly, circulated as document A/59/864. In this letter, I have been requested by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions to transmit to the General Assembly without delay the section of its report on its sixty-fifth session dealing with requests for exception under Article 19 from a number of Member States.

Additionally, I have received a letter dated 29 June 2005 from Sao Tome and Principe (A/59/869), a letter dated 8 July 2005 from Niger (A/59/868) and a letter dated 13 July 2005 from Liberia (A/59/871), requesting the General Assembly to act expeditiously to grant those three countries the exemption under Article 19 and to have this important matter taken up by the General Assembly in plenary meeting at the beginning of July.

The Assembly also has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/59/L.66.

As it is my understanding that agenda item 113 will not be taken up by the Fifth Committee in July, and in order for the General Assembly to proceed expeditiously with the consideration of this matter and of draft resolution A/59/L.66, may I take it that the General Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 113 directly in plenary meeting under heading 1, "Organizational, administrative and other matters"?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of agenda item 113?

As I see no objection, we shall proceed accordingly.

The General Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 113.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/59/864)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.66)

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Georgia to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.66.

Mr. Chitaia (Georgia): I have the honour of introducing draft resolution A/59/L.66 on behalf of the following sponsors: the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, the Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia and Tajikistan.

At the outset, I wish to express my sincere thanks to you, President Ping, for exercising leadership in taking up this important matter of requests for exemption under Article 19 of the United Nations Charter in plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

The Government of Georgia, like other sponsors of this draft resolution, remains committed to meeting its financial obligations under the Charter, despite the difficult challenges facing it. That commitment certainly includes the implementation of multiyear payment plans.

Thanks to your leadership, there is mounting momentum for United Nations reform, as evidenced by the lively discussions taking place in this very Hall. I am convinced that the decisions we make prior to and during the summit in September will be of historic importance.

It would be contrary to the interests of the Organization if Member States willing to participate in and contribute to deliberations on United Nations reform were excluded from the decision-making process. This is precisely the reason for which the sponsors have decided to submit the present draft resolution, and we earnestly appeal to all Member States to ensure its smooth adoption.

Draft resolution A/59/L.66 takes as its model last year's resolution on the same theme — resolution 59/1. In our humble opinion, all the necessary elements are mentioned in the draft, including the reference to resolution 54/237 C, which sets out basic rules relating to the implementation of Article 19 of the Charter.

Furthermore, the present draft resolution is an arrangement of a tentative nature. The delegations that sponsored the draft resolution, bearing in mind the concerns that various delegations might have, have done their best to accommodate such concerns.

We have no intention of prejudicing consideration by the Fifth Committee in the autumn. It is from that perspective that operative paragraphs 4 and 7 stipulate that the General Assembly would permit us to vote "until the Assembly takes a final decision during the main part of the sixtieth session".

My delegation welcomes the information that Liberia has submitted a letter to the President of the General Assembly requesting an exemption under Article 19 of the Charter, and it is my pleasure to announce that Liberia has also joined the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

I should therefore like to request all member States to support my delegation's proposal to include Liberia in operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7, along with the Niger and Sao Tome and Principe.

Allow me to reiterate our appeal for the smooth adoption of the draft resolution. We sincerely hope that we will be able to take part in the historic decisions regarding United Nations reform, and we believe also that expeditious action by the General Assembly in that regard will serve the collective interests of the Organization.

The President (*spoke in French*): We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/59/L.66, as orally revised.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Al-Humaimidi (Iraq) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to speak before the General Assembly.

My delegation requested the floor in order to make a statement under item 113 on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, prior to the adoption of draft resolution A/59/L.66, in order to extend our sincere thanks to the Committee on Contributions for all the efforts it has deployed and is still deploying in carrying out its mandated tasks, in particular in considering the request for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

In that regard, my delegation would like to note that it has previously presented to the President of the General Assembly a request to exempt Iraq from paying its financial obligations due to the circumstances and conditions currently prevailing in Iraq, as clearly explained before the Committee on Contributions, which is considering the issue, as

indicated in document A/59/864, paragraphs 104, 105, 106 and 107 of the annex.

My delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Committee on Contributions for its understanding of the situation of Iraq and for recommending that Iraq be allowed to exercise its right to vote until 30 June 2006. At the same time, the delegation of Iraq has been making strenuous efforts, working together with the Secretariat and the Security Council, to be permitted to pay its financial obligations from its assets in the security account that was established pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions with regard to the former regime in Iraq.

Thanks to the understanding of the Secretary-General and the Security Council, our efforts have been crowned with success and Iraq has made payment of all its financial obligations to the regular budget of the United Nations and to the peacekeeping budget, as well as with regard to the activities of the special Tribunals and to the United Nations capital master plan.

My delegation would like also to take note of the Secretary-General's letter dated 29 June 2005 addressed to the President of the General Assembly, which is contained in document A/59/668/Add.16.

Clearly, the President of the General Assembly and the Committee on Contributions were kept duly informed of all those developments, and Iraq was not included in the text of draft resolution A/59/L.66, which is now before the Assembly for consideration. However, my delegation wished to brief the General Assembly on this matter.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/59/L.66, entitled "Requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations", as orally revised.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.66, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/59/L.66, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 59/313).

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 113.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.114

General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

114th plenary meeting
Monday, 18 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/59/874)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/59/874, which contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs the Assembly that 10 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

Members will recall that the General Assembly, by its resolution 59/312 of 14 July 2005, decided that nine out of the 10 Member States should be permitted to vote in the General Assembly until the Assembly takes a final decision during the main part of its sixtieth session. That information is duly reflected in document A/59/874.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/59/874?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Draft resolution (A/59/L.67)

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.67.

Mr. Wali (Nigeria): On behalf of African Member States, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.67, sponsored by the States listed in the document. I should also like to state that the following States have joined as sponsors of the draft resolution: Benin, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Eritrea, Togo and Swaziland.

Africa's quest for membership on an expanded Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories has been expressed in the various contributions of African States to past debates, including the consultations initiated by you, Sir. Africa's position is based on the appreciation that that important organ has to adapt itself to the current realities by reflecting the principle of equity and

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balance in its composition and competences. That could not be otherwise, given that the Council exercises primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security throughout the world. The Council shall therefore gain in stature and win wider legitimacy within the international community for its decisions if it is truly representative of all the membership.

At their recently concluded fifth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union in Sirte, in the great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, African heads of State and Government resolved to throw the weight of their political support behind the current efforts of the international community to achieve that objective. Africa considers that now is the most opportune time to take a decision on that matter, on which there have been several debates over the years. The issues are clear, the challenges obvious and the opportunities enormous. The forthcoming High-Level Event next September will provide Member States with an invaluable opportunity to rekindle the hopes of mankind and confidence in the United Nations as our foremost multilateral body. Such a decision will also serve to convince critics of the Organization that the Member States can rise above narrow self-interest and embrace the larger interests of the international community.

The foregoing points undergird the draft resolution, which, in its preambular paragraphs, contains the following principles. First, it reaffirms the commitment to strengthening the United Nations, including the Security Council. Secondly, the views of Member States should count in the decision to bring to fruition ideas on Council reform. Thirdly, the Security Council needs to be more representative of the entire membership. That entails correction of the current inequity and imbalance in its composition. Fourthly, the Council will be better placed to perform its primary responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security when it is more inclusive.

In the operative paragraphs, the draft resolution makes a strong case for the realization of the foregoing objectives. It envisages a size for the Council that would neither weaken its cohesion nor erode the common will to defend and advance the cause of international peace and security worldwide. It proposes a distribution of the seats in the permanent and non-permanent categories in a manner that should ensure greater representation of the developing countries, whilst taking account of some key players with significant contributions to make to the advancement of the goals and objectives of the United Nations. It seeks to invest the new permanent members in particular with competences commensurate with their new responsibilities in an expanded Council. Finally, it proposes that there be an amendment of the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter to bring into effect the proposed expansion.

The African Group considers the draft to be balanced and tailored to meet the challenges of our time. It proposes gains for every region, as recommended by the Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, as well as the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom". It also seeks to address the fundamental imbalance in the composition of the Security Council.

The instruction of African heads of State is to ask that the draft resolution be submitted with a view to serving as a reference point for negotiation with other Member States and interested groups. Africa is therefore open to negotiations, but if negotiations are to be productive, it goes without saying that the interlocutors must have some fundamental points of agreement, bearing in mind the determination of Africa to rectify its present position as the only region without representation on the Security Council in the permanent membership category. The sponsors therefore commend the draft resolution to Member States for consideration.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is pleased to participate in the submission of the African draft resolution on reform and expansion of the Security Council, which encapsulates the vision and wisdom of the African leaders who arrived at this common position at the Sirte summit of African States held at the beginning of this month to demonstrate their aspiration to contribute effectively to the fulfilment of the international community's hopes for real institutional reform based on affirming the principles of justice and equality and on the effective participation of all States, cultures and civilizations in the collective international work of the United Nations.

Despite the fact that African issues dominate more than 60 per cent of the Security Council's agenda, several practices and historical factors have deprived our continent of representation in the permanent category of membership of the Security

Council, as well as of its equitable share in the non-permanent membership. Thus, the time has come to redress the situation as we embark on genuine institutional reform of our Organization and for Africa to regain its legitimate rights with a view to enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of Security Council actions and resolutions, as well as its capacity to address the new challenges and threats faced by the international community.

Africa, in its efforts to reach this stage, has taken several important steps, beginning in Mauritius in 1976, which represents the real launching point towards meeting our common objective, followed by the adoption, in Harare in 1997, of our first African common position, which was recently re-evaluated and reformulated in the Ezulwini Consensus. The Ezulwini Consensus is the basis upon which the Sirte Declaration and the draft resolution before us were adopted.

Throughout the process, our African solidarity, which is the foundation of all our common endeavours, has been the guiding light of our objective. The Ezulwini Consensus was the result of mutual compromises by all African States, whether they supported models A or B. It painted a comprehensive picture of our common position, which is based on demanding two permanent seats, with all the privileges and prerogatives enjoyed by the current permanent members, including the right of veto, in addition to five non-permanent seats, thus allowing all of our five subregions continued representation on the Council at all levels and at all times. Moreover, we have managed to institute solid foundations and guarantees for an expansion that will serve the interests of the whole of Africa. We have clearly emphasized, leaving no room for any doubt, the integrity of all elements of our common African position, without exception.

No other regional group has managed to address the issue at hand in a regional context based on the principles of cooperation and solidarity, which are, in our view, essential to strengthening the democratic foundation upon which each region would select its own representatives to the Security Council. In contrast, Africa is the only region that has addressed the regional dimension of the expansion of the Council with a view to strengthening the ties between the performance of new African members and the core issues of our continent that dominate the Council's agenda, while taking into consideration the relevant provisions of the Charter mandating the election of the members of the Council by a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly.

As is evident in the draft resolution before us, Africa has not considered its own demands, interests and aspirations alone. We have presented an integral vision of a just expansion of the Security Council that takes into consideration the interests of all geographic regions and guarantees a balanced representation of all civilizations and cultures in the expanded Council. In that context, Africa has also taken into consideration the just demands of the Non-Aligned Movement, as contained in the Final Document of the Durban summit of 1998, by proposing an increase in the membership of the Security Council to no less than 26 seats. Furthermore, the African draft resolution reflects the link between African aspirations, on the one hand, and those of all four of the other regional groups of the United Nations, without necessarily undermining the right of each region to determine its own vision of what would serve its idea of justice and what would meet its interests.

In that context, Africa has initiated, through the follow-up mechanism established by its leaders in Sirte, a series of meetings and consultations with all regional and political groupings, as well as other stakeholders, with the objective of expanding the basis for an inclusive agreement that would meet all of our interests, without exception.

The delegation of Egypt would like to align itself with the call made by Nigeria, in its capacity as the current Chairman of the African Union, on all Member States to support the African draft resolution, which presents a new dimension in the institutional reform process to which we aspire. Among the main pillars of the draft resolution is the call for the elimination of the right of veto for all, current and potential permanent members of the Security Council alike, as an anachronistic and undemocratic practice that does not correspond to the spirit of our times. However, and until that objective is fulfilled, Africa would insist, based on the principles of equality, justice and democracy, that all new permanent members enjoy the right of veto on an equal footing with the current permanent members.

Membership on the Security Council is a responsibility that will be shouldered by those States selected for such an honour. Thus, that type of

membership must be based on an increasing capacity to contribute effectively to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. We must strive to correct all the mistakes of the past and to ensure a balance between all regions and civilizations through the process of expanding the membership of the Security Council.

To that end, our shared responsibility will also lead us to work for the genuine reform of the working methods of the Security Council, which will essentially address abuses, reaffirm the balance between the mandates of the principal organs of the United Nations, and guarantee that the Security Council will remain a model of justice and equality and a platform for an effective partnership in the formulation and implementation of a new collective security system.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): This is the second time within a week that the General Assembly has taken up consideration of a draft resolution — this one introduced by Africa — on Security Council reform. In that regard, I fully associate myself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Union.

I should like at the outset to stress that, far from being reactive, Africa, in formally submitting its draft resolution, is staking its claim as a powerhouse of ideas with its vision of a renewed, more democratic and more representative Security Council. It is also seeking to remedy a historical injustice, as it continues to be the only continent lacking a permanent seat on the Security Council.

As reflected in the draft resolution now before the Assembly, the African approach to Security Council reform reflects Africa's aspirations as set out in the Ezulwini Consensus and reaffirmed in the Sirte Declaration, as well as its commitment to a reform of the Security Council aimed at better reflecting the realities of today's world and taking better account of the legitimate aspirations of all Member States. Africa proposes to enlarge the Security Council to 26 seats. It claims for itself two permanent seats with the same prerogatives and privileges as current permanent members, including the right of veto, as well as five non-permanent seats. At the appropriate moment, and acting in solidarity and unity and in accordance with the Sirte Declaration, the African Union will decide upon the modalities for the allocation of its seats. The other seats would be allocated to the other regional groups in accordance with the arrangements set out in the African draft resolution.

I should like to recall that that approach was adopted unanimously by the Assembly of the African Union, which is its supreme body. As a result, Africa makes its proposal in a spirit of unity and solidarity and motivated by the requisite determination and commitment to reach our common goal through the participation of all. That goal is to reform the Security Council to make it more democratic, legitimate, representative and effective.

My goal today is not to explain to the Assembly the various elements of the draft resolution or to remind it of the progression and the different stages that Africa travelled following the Mauritius summit to reach the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. However, I would like to underscore the basic tenets that comprise the African position, namely, the two permanent seats to be allocated to Africa would include the right of the veto. Secondly, Africa would be given two additional non-permanent seats. Lastly, the selection of African candidates will be made by the African Union.

I would like to return to our position with regard to the veto. In that connection, I would like to remind the Assembly that, since 1976, African countries have adopted a position of principle against the right of veto, viewing it as anti-democratic, unfair and anachronistic. However, in 1997 at Harare, when the African position on enlargement of the Security Council was drafted and adopted, our countries claimed two permanent seats with veto power. At Ezulwini, Africa reiterated its opposition to the right of the veto, while at the same time deciding that, just as the current permanent members had the right, Africa should have it as well.

For my delegation, the choice is straightforward: either we abolish the right of veto or we grant it to all permanent members. I repeat that we cannot be satisfied with a three-tiered Security Council. What do with diminished permanent seats. We know that without the right of the veto new permanent members would have no impact on the course of events. They would be unable to influence the power relations within the Security Council, which would continue to be dominated by the five existing permanent members. I would reiterate that the key characteristic

permanent seat is not the permanence of the seat itself, but the privileges attached to it.

While we reiterate our readiness and commitment to work with all delegations to make progress on the issue of Security Council reform, I would like to state very clearly that we believe that the Sirte Declaration provides for no deviation or concession with regard to the elements I have just set out, which are the very core of the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. I would also like to reiterate that my delegation is prepared to work diligently to reach a final decision on Security Council reform before September. Such reform is of key importance to all of us, as the status quo is not acceptable to any of us. There remain almost two months between now and the September meeting. I know that you, Mr. President, are prepared to hold a vote on Security Council reform between now and 14 September, once the delegations concerned express the desire for that vote. Let us therefore negotiate in good faith, calmly and with a sense of urgency devoid of haste. Let us not yield to the artificial timetables that would be imposed upon us. If necessary, let us work throughout August to ensure the success of all the reforms the Organization so badly needs — Security Council reform clearly being an integral part of that.

Lastly, I would like to call upon all States to join in sponsoring the African draft resolution and to vote in its favour if it is put to the vote.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to afford the African Union the opportunity to introduce to the General Assembly our draft resolution on Security Council reform (A/59/L.67). We align ourselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Union.

The draft resolution introduced today is the product of extensive consultations within the African Union. It sets out the common African position on Security Council reform as adopted by our leaders during the meeting of the Union's Assembly of heads of State held in Sirte, Libya, earlier this month.

Africa seeks two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats in an expanded Security Council, as well as fundamental changes to the working methods of the Council, in order to make it more transparent and accountable. The principle that underpins the draft resolution is the need to ensure that Africa has effective representation in the Security Council, as do all the other regions of the world. That is especially important given that it is African issues that currently dominate the agenda of the Security Council.

We believe that we have reached a decisive phase in the decades-long debate on the reform of the Security Council. Member States now have an unprecedented opportunity to modernize the Council and to make it more representative of, and responsive to, the needs of all countries and peoples. We believe that this is the time to begin to redress the historical injustices in global governance and to give a voice to the billions of people in the developing world who are now excluded from the decision-making process in the Security Council. It is also time to close a chapter of history following two world wars and to move forward in our quest for collective security by working together in a much more inclusive, transparent and democratic manner.

We believe that if we fail to seize this opportunity, the credibility and legitimacy of the Security Council and the entire system of global governance will continue to erode, to the detriment of us all. We believe that we have reached the point where meeting public expectations for good global governance can no longer be deferred to some undetermined point in the future.

We in Africa view Security Council reform as an important and integral part of a larger reform process at the United Nations and beyond. We proceed from the fact that people in developed and developing countries alike aspire to live in dignity, free from want and fear. We are therefore ready to fully engage all regions of the world in the work of the United Nations and to enlist their support for the progress of humanity. We therefore urge the international community to support Africa's aspirations in that regard.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): There is at least one widely held view concerning Security Council reform, namely, that Africa deserves better representation than it currently has in that decision-making body. It was the desire to redress that, at best, unfair situation that on several occasions — at Harare in 1997, Ouagodougou in 1998 and, most recently, at Abuja and Sirte — led African heads of State to reaffirm the need to right that historical wrong. The Sirte Declaration is quite explicit on that point, given that African heads of State called for ensuring "Africa's legitimate rights to a fair and equitable

geographical representation". Making that desire a reality led to the draft resolution that the African Union has today introduced for consideration by the General Assembly (A/59/L.67).

The proposals contained in the draft resolution constitute the minimum Africa can ask, taking into account that it is the only continent without a permanent seat on the Security Council; whereas Europe alone has no fewer than three. Any restructuring of that organ should therefore not fail to consider that fundamental truth.

It is also certain that, given that no reform of the United Nations can take place without Africa — which, with its 53 States, represents roughly 37 per cent of the votes in the General Assembly — everything points to the need for the decisive force represented by Africa to be taken into account. That is not to say that Africa can act alone — far from it. No group can act alone in this enormous undertaking. The solidarity of others is therefore crucial and indispensable. It is for that reason that Africa called for this debate and for consultation on the basis of its draft resolution. It goes without saying that by referring to negotiations we also mean understanding, and even concessions, all of which must take place in a framework of justice and equity. In considering this draft resolution, which is flexible and balanced, we should therefore be able to reach a dynamic compromise.

Once again, the purpose is the democratization of the Security Council to make it reflect the realities of today's world as much as possible. One of those realities is that most of Africa was not represented at the time of the establishment of the United Nations, in 1945. As the Secretary-General has said, we cannot constantly ask States to observe democracy without setting an example. In that regard, we believe that the democratization formula proposed by Africa in the draft resolution now before the Assembly can contribute to establishing the new order to which we aspire.

Burkina Faso therefore very strongly supports the statement made by the representative of Nigeria, whose country currently holds the chairmanship of the African Union, in introducing the draft resolution on behalf of all of Africa. We urge the Assembly to do likewise by fully supporting the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.67.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker for this meeting.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 53.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.115

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

115th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 26 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Draft resolution (A/59/L.68)

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Canada to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68.

Mr. Rock (Canada): Canada is honoured to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68. The objective of the draft resolution is to achieve the fairest and most democratic approach to the complex and controversial question of Security Council enlargement, while seeking the broadest possible consensus on how to proceed.

Let me begin, Sir, by explaining why Canada is introducing the draft resolution.

First, while we recognize the importance of Security Council reform, we want to see it achieved without unduly dividing the membership, particularly at a time when we must come together on the even more important agenda that we will place before leaders in September. It will not serve our larger purpose if we are left divided after choosing among resolutions that favour a few, leaving fissures and factions as we pick winners and losers once and for all.

Draft resolution A/59/L.68 represents an effort in good faith to avoid such an all-or-nothing showdown. It would add no permanent members to the Council, but rather would create new permanent seats in each region, leaving it to the members of each regional group to decide which Member States should sit in those seats and for how long. That approach would permit us to achieve all of the major objectives for Security Council reform while preserving an environment conducive to broad agreement in September and cooperation in the years ahead.

Secondly, Canada sincerely believes that it is not in the best interests of the United Nations and not in the best interests of the great majority of its Members to add new permanent members to the Security Council. Let me emphasize at once that our purpose is not to oppose the aspirants, but rather to support the principle that widening the circle for the few who seek special status, no matter how worthy their candidacies, would make the Security Council less accountable for its conduct, more remote from the membership and less representative of the world's regions.

(*spoke in French*)

Let me now describe the outcome that Canada favours.

Draft resolution A/59/L.68 would enlarge the Council to 25 members, with 20 of those to be elected for two-year terms. It would distribute the elected seats equitably among the regions. It would allow for consecutive re-election, and it would leave to each

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region the decision about arrangements for both the rotation of the seats and the duration of each member State's term on the Council.

Why do we prefer this approach? There are five reasons.

(*spoke in English*)

First, it is democratic. At a time when so many of us promote democratic principles of governance, is it not essential that we reflect those same principles in our own governance, in the crucial decision about which Member States will serve on the United Nations most powerful body? Is it not fundamental that, where regions are accorded a permanent presence, those that serve on the Council must manifestly hold the continuing confidence of their regional colleagues, tested and expressed at intervals that the regional members consider appropriate? And what is more basic to the very notion of democracy than elections — not once and forever, in which power shifts permanently to the office holder, but periodically, so that authority remains with the electors and holding the office is seen as a privilege, not a right.

After all, in a democratic system, the electorate — in this case, the Member States — must have the authority to choose its representatives. I know of no democracy in which a single election is sufficient to entitle the winner to remain in office in perpetuity.

Secondly, the approach provided for in draft resolution A/59/L.68 makes the Council more accountable to the Member States. Permanence is the polar opposite of accountability. Permanence produces positions that reflect national perspectives. Permanence claims the power of the office as of right, and forevermore.

Draft resolution A/59/L.68 takes a different approach. It accepts that there will be no change in the permanent five, but it does not expand the permanent class beyond those chosen in 1945 and it draws on more contemporary values in proposing an enlarged Council in which membership is earned by winning and keeping the confidence of one's peers. Apart from being sound in principle, the accountability that is inherent in that approach is also more likely to produce a Security Council in which regional and global concerns predominate over simply national interests.

Thirdly, our draft resolution provides for flexible allocation of Council seats. In a changing world, with its dynamic regions, it is surely unwise to lock into place arrangements that may reflect today's circumstances, when tomorrow may confront us wi very different needs. The very process of change th has now made Security Council reform desirab argues for a flexible, not a fixed, formula, for t process of change is never-ending. And who can s what changes will come in the decades ahead? And s for that reason, draft resolution A/59/L.68 allows eac regional group to adjust the allocation of seats amon its members depending upon the needs of a particul time and upon the capacity of certain of its members serve in the interests of all.

But there is another aspect of this dra resolution's flexibility that should be stressed. It allow for repeated terms of different aggregate length amon the elected seats permanently allocated to each regio Let me illustrate the value of that asymmetric approach by referring to an example.

Draft resolution A/59/L.68 permanently accor Africa six seats on the Security Council. The Africa Group has made it clear that it wants to have tw representatives on the Council who will be there for t long term. Our draft resolution empowers the Africa Group to identify two of its members who wi represent the region for as long a period as the Grou decides. Since the decision about re-election woul belong to the members of the African Group, the would have the authority to make those two Memb States continuous members of the Security Counci The result would be that the region would hav permanent seats, and the members of the region group could decide that some of those seats would b held continuously by certain of its members. Th balance of the seats set aside for Africa could be he for periods of duration to be determined by the regio That asymmetrical arrangement illustrates how t flexibility of the approach proposed in this dra resolution can be made to serve the specific interests each particular group.

Fourthly, draft resolution A/59/L.68 provides f fairness by creating the possibility that a great number of Member States could rotate through th seats allocated to each region. None of the sea created by our draft resolution would be set aside for chosen few. All 20 of the elected seats would b available to Member States. In an Organization o equal sovereign Members, there should be no second class countries. Our draft resolution would give eve State a voice.

Fifth, and finally, draft resolution A/59/L.68 provides for meaningful and effective Security Council reform, but without forcing divisive and potentially damaging votes on the General Assembly as individual States vie among themselves for special status. Each of the other draft resolutions before the Assembly provides for new permanent members of the Council. But if either one of those draft resolutions were to be adopted, that would only be the beginning of a contentious and competitive process. How much time would be needed? How many secret ballots would be cast? What tensions and pressures would be created during the inevitable subsequent steps? The approach that draft resolution L.68 puts forward would entail a single initial vote of the Assembly, with subsequent elections that would simply implement the choices of regional groups.

It is precisely because structural change in this institution is so difficult that it has been so rarely attempted. There has been but a handful of occasions in the 60-year history of the United Nations when Member States have been called upon to make defining decisions about its format and its future. And yet, there is a sense among many of us that this is such a moment: a rare opportunity to make significant change to the Organization's most significant body. When such historic decisions are made — choices that will have profound effects for generations to come — it is necessary that they be made wisely, that they be made based on principle, that they reflect our shared values and that they advance our common purpose.

In this case, and measured against that standard, Canada believes that the wiser course — the principled course — is clear. It is to choose the option that is consistent with our shared values of democracy, accountability, flexibility and fairness. We believe that draft resolution A/59/L.68 meets that test. Canada will support it, and we respectfully urge other Member States to do the same.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy, who will also introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): The statement made by Ambassador Rock, the Permanent Representative of Canada, on behalf of the group of States known as Uniting for Consensus provides a forceful and meaningful illustration of the principles and values on which our draft resolution is based. Therefore, in introducing the draft resolution proposed by Uniting for Consensus, I will first of all recall the statement that I delivered on 1 July, which I am again circulating today. I should once again like to draw the attention of the members of the General Assembly to the principles, values and numbers highlighted in that statement. They are not only the milestones on which our draft resolution is anchored; they also serve to confirm that the model set out by the group of four countries is structured in such a way as to benefit just six happy few, to the detriment of all the other 180 Member States, resulting in tremendous divisive impact on the membership.

But I am sure that Member States will not accept being taken for a ride. Arrogance never pays. We are here because we believe in dialogue with an open mind; because we believe in the principles of the Charter; because we believe in the principle of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations; because we believe that no reform will be able to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization if it is not rooted in the principle of fair and equal opportunity for all Members; and because only then will we be able to strengthen and enhance our sense of ownership of this house and our sense of belonging to an Organization of which we can be proud. It is in that sense, and along those lines, that the draft resolution proposed by Uniting for Consensus intends to offer a constructive and non-divisive platform for discussion and decision — a platform that, as Ambassador Rock has stated, is extremely flexible and centred on strong regional empowerment.

Allow me now to take up a very delicate issue, even if reluctantly. Let us call it the ethical issue that, if not addressed properly, risks bringing shame upon this house and destabilizing the entire process of reform. In mentioning the ethical issue with regard to Security Council reform, I am referring to the resort by the group of four States to financial leverage and pressure in order to induce a Government to align or not align itself with a certain position or to co-sponsor or vote in favour of a certain draft resolution. All of us in the Hall know what has been going on in some capitals, including, for example, threats to cut off financial assistance or stop the implementation of a certain project. It is now time for those who care about the Organization to stand up and say, Enough is enough.

Not later than yesterday morning — but, believe me, this is only the latest example of many such

instances — a donor country member of the group of four informed a Government that had co-sponsored the draft resolution put forth by Uniting for Consensus that, because that country was not siding with the group of four and was instead siding with Uniting for Consensus, the donor would put an end to a development project already in place in that country. That project, with a value of $460,000, concerns children, by the way. The donor also informed the country in question that it would never start another important infrastructure project that had already been decided upon.

Is not that kind of improper and unethical behaviour a shame? It is a shame that, for the sake of preserving the dignity of all Member States, we can tolerate no longer. I will say it again. Enough is enough. After the oil-for-food scandal, the Organization — which is to say, all of us, Member States as well as those who have institutional responsibilities in the Organization — cannot afford the luxury of another scandal that is much more serious and destabilizing than the oil-for-food scandal. For this is not a question of pocketing money; it is a question of ethics and moral values. It is a question of blackmailing some sectors of the membership and taking undue advantage of their vital needs. Enough is enough.

We should promote a public culture in the United Nations in which responsible political advocacy, without distortions or abuse, becomes the operative norm, a culture in which legitimate political advocacy or lobbying do not cross an undoubtedly thin borderline and become blackmail and corruptive practices. Donor countries should remember that development aid cannot become a pretext for uncalled-for influence.

If we want to avoid betraying those Members that believe in the Organization and in its ethical foundations, we have a moral obligation not to allow the reform of the Security Council to be decided in this unhealthy and poisoned environment. I am sure that you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General will not turn your heads and that you will not want to be responsible before the international community for deciding to sweep the dust under the carpet and foregoing an in-depth assessment of the situation through an independent committee of inquiry, or any other initiative that you would deem appropriate.

What is at stake is the credibility of the Organization and its reform process. As the Secretary-General has said, we are striving for freedom from fear; yes, that is indeed true. We are fighting to free a Member State from the fear of losing financial assistance and foreign development aid just for refusing to comply with requests for political allegiance from someone more powerful. Reforms cannot be dictated by power or money. They have to be dictated by principles. It is our duty to strengthen the hand of those Member States who rely upon the Organization, who must know that they will be able to say no to improper and unethical requests without fear and without suffering financial consequences that would be unbearable for them.

It is time we all say, Enough is enough! The Organization cannot accept, cannot tolerate and definitely cannot afford a stained reform that is perceived as the result of corruptive practices. We trust, Mr. President, in your leadership, wisdom and resolve.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia, who will also introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68.

Mrs. Holguín (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government of Colombia has worked for several years to devise a reform of the Security Council that meets the expectations of the international community, minimizes the differences between countries and makes a reality of the principle of sovereign equality, which is a fundamental pillar of the Organization. As a result, we are today introducing draft resolution A/59/L.68 as a sponsor. We believe that the draft resolution has important strengths. It is flexible, democratic, open and participatory in character. It also has a regional emphasis that is unique in this debate. This proposal would avoid increasing the differences in the multilateral system.

Colombia was one of two countries to vote against establishing the veto when the Organization was founded, in 1945. We have never believed in privileges. That same position is reflected in draft resolution L.68. Our conviction has not changed, and the dynamics of today's world reaffirms our principled position.

We are not at present overcoming a world war. If the world is in any sense evolving, it is towards the plurality of multilateralism, with 191 Member States

that have diverse and dynamic national and regional realities. Our development needs are not met by creating new Powers by virtue of a vote at the United Nations, a vote that might lead to deep internal confrontation in the Organization and that would benefit no one.

The five permanent members of the Security Council are products of agreements of the Second World War. Many countries arrived at the Organization with the rules of the game having already been established. They had to accept those rules in the hopes of obtaining benefits in the areas of development and progress. That was a period of reconstruction, when most of the current Members did not have an opportunity to speak or make decisions. We are now at an opportune moment to create an organization adapted to an international scenario that includes numerous actors, challenges, threats and realities. Our response must therefore be manifold.

We should ask ourselves what we want from the United Nations, how we want it to work and for what purposes we want it to exist in coming decades.

Colombia would like the United Nations of the twenty-first century to strengthen its development agenda, effectively promote the progress of countries and to cooperate to overcome limitations in infrastructure, technology, training and investment. Only social and economic development will provide us an opportunity to realize sovereign equality.

We do not want a United Nations that deals with all problems by taking coercive, punitive and forceful measures that do not lead to long-term solutions. We do not want a United Nations that makes States dependent on the system or on peace operations for their existence and survival, operations that over the years have been weak with regard to building national capacities for autonomous and sustainable State administration. We want missions to help strengthen institutions and national governance and not to distort countries' political, economic and social realities, so that their development possibilities are not delayed or limited.

We do not believe that international peace and security are built up and strengthened through the delegation of decisions that affect and distort national and regional dynamics. In many cases, States with greater familiarity with and understanding of specific situations are small and medium-sized countries, where there is greater geographical and cultural closeness and affinity. Their understanding of the world is different from that of a country of another region with different dynamics.

We want a United Nations where the opinions of all are taken into account and respected. We want a United Nations where we can all decide on multilateral issues. We want a United Nations without paternalism or handouts. We want a United Nations without dependence, selectivity or arbitrariness — a United Nations that makes the principle of the sovereign equality of States a reality. We want a United Nations that gives priority to everyone's needs and where everyone sees that his or her opinions are taken into account. We want a United Nations where every State, regardless of its political, military or economic power, can contribute to decision-making. We want a United Nations that serves everyone and works for the development and stability of all peoples.

Our vision of Security Council reform is in line with that thinking: a Council that is representative of regional dynamics, a Council whose composition is flexible in response to global changes and to the realities of power in every historical period, a Council that does not perpetuate privileges. We remain convinced that the veto must be eliminated and, if that is impossible, that it must not be extended for any reason.

The Uniting for Consensus proposal envisages a 25-member Security Council with 20 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms, with the possibility of re-election depending on the decisions of each regional group. That is intended to give meaning to regional representation and to make the countries in the Council feel involved with the rest of the membership in carrying out their functions.

We did not want this decision to come to a vote; we wanted to reach a common agreement on Council reform. But the past few months of tension have left us all very troubled. We have not communicated; we have not negotiated; mistrust and divisions have deepened. That has led us to the alternative of a vote. We hope that countries take this decision out of conviction and principle, not because of pressures and temporary, fleeting circumstantial interests. The decision to vote means a decision for history.

This exercise leaves us with the need to mend bilateral relations and the challenge of improving

relationships with the Organization. Let us not pretend that the United Nations will be relevant if we create exclusive spaces. Let us not think of strengthening it when multilateralism is being weakened and fragmented and when the great majority is relegated to ostracism.

Over time, the United Nations has become a mechanism for building consensus on the diverse and varied items on our agenda. Since its creation, the United Nations has needed reform, because it is an Organization that evolves with time and with each historical period. Despite its shortcomings, it has functioned and has managed to bring 191 States together around common goals and principles. The shortcomings call for us to change. Given that the international system is a plurality of military, economic and political power, let us adapt the United Nations to that broad and flexible reality. Let us not return it to the structure of the past century, of 60 years ago.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on the representative of Pakistan, who will also introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.68, which contains the proposal for Security Council reform submitted by the Uniting for Consensus movement.

Pakistan fully supports the introductory statement made so eloquently on behalf of the sponsors by Ambassador Allan Rock of Canada. The Permanent Representative of Canada outlined the major merits of our draft resolution. My delegation also had the opportunity, during our statement in the General Assembly on 11 July, to explain the proposal. Let me briefly recapitulate the virtues of our draft resolution.

First, it is fair and equitable. It adheres to the principle of sovereign equality and will not discriminate between Member States.

Secondly, it will increase the Council's representativeness. The majority of the Members of the United Nations are small and medium-sized States. Our proposal will double the chances of 186 countries to secure membership in the Council.

Thirdly, it will enhance accountability, through the mechanism of periodic elections and re-elections. Those States that seek Council membership to represent regions or groups will remain periodically answerable to those regions and groups, as well as to the General Assembly.

Fourthly, our proposal is simple. It proposes direct approval of a Charter amendment rather than a complex and uncertain three-stage process.

Fifthly, our proposal is realistic. Since it accommodates the interests and positions of all Member States, it is more likely to secure eventual ratification.

As I have mentioned before, the greatest virtue of the draft resolution submitted by Uniting for Consensus is its flexibility. It can accommodate, through variable geometry, the aspirations and interests of the majority of the membership, including regional groups such as the African Union (AU).

We have taken full note of the proposal submitted by the African Union in document A/59/L.67. I would like to submit that our resolution and that submitted by the AU are fully compatible. Both proposals are based on the principle that each region would be in a position to construct its own architecture for representation on the Security Council. The African Union has called for two permanent seats for Africa with full rights. We see the African demand as qualitatively different from the call in the group of four's draft resolution for six new permanent members. Permanent members do not represent their regions, only themselves. The group of four countries are seeking permanent membership for themselves, not for their regions. The AU has indicated that the two permanent seats it is seeking would represent Africa and "act on its behalf". The African Union would also select its own representatives for those permanent seats. If the AU chooses two countries to represent it continuously — in other words, permanently — against those two seats, that would be possible under the Uniting for Consensus resolution.

If the African Union decides that three, four, five or more countries should occupy those two seats by rotation, that too could be accommodated under our proposal. The additional benefit of our proposal is that the AU would retain the power to ensure accountability on the part of those States that will represent it on the Council. Our proposal could also ensure representation of all the subregions of Africa. The six non-permanent seats for Africa under our proposal could enable it to fulfil the desire for equitable representation of each of its five subregions.

We fully understand Africa's desire to possess the same rights as other regions. As we understand it, Africa is seeking this right — the right of veto — on behalf of the entire African region, not for one or two States. My delegation believes that ways and means can be developed under the Uniting for Consensus proposal to provide Africa with the collective ability to uphold its interests in a reformed Security Council.

Another commonality between the position of Uniting for Consensus and that of the African Union is our shared desire to achieve a result based on the broadest possible agreement. We value the Sirte summit's emphasis on solidarity and unity. We believe that such solidarity and unity must be upheld not only within the AU, but within the general membership of the United Nations.

Since our proposal is based on a regional approach, it can also accommodate the interests of subregions such as the Arab League, the Caribbean Community and Central America. The larger number of elected seats that would be available under our proposals could be appropriately distributed within each region to ensure the representation of subregions as well as other political groupings, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Through the provision for immediate re-election, our proposal could also offer the possibility of long-term and even continuous membership for some States if they are nominated for that purpose by their respective regions. Thus, the group of four could hope to realize its aspirations if it has regional support. Yet there are two important differences between the group of four's approach and our proposal: first, we preserve the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the Charter, and secondly, we ensure that through periodic elections, any country seeking to represent its region would continue to be accountable to the general membership through the process of such elections. That is indeed the essence of democracy.

The formal tabling of our draft proposal should not be construed as our concurrence with a vote on the crucial issue of Security Council reform. On the contrary, Uniting for Consensus remains convinced that any proposal for Security Council reform, if it is to be successful and conclusive, must be developed on the basis of consensus or the broadest possible agreement. Our proposal has been submitted to indicate the serious nature of our position and our desire for an early agreement on Security Council reform. Such a solution can be achieved through patient dialogue and consultations.

Therefore, we must express concern at reports that the sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.64 — that is, the group of four — will call for a vote on their draft in the near future. Such a vote would be a recipe for disaster: disaster for Security Council reform, for United Nations reform and for international peace and cooperation.

A vote would divide the United Nations membership, exacerbating tensions in every region of the world, and thus would block the central purposes of the United Nations Charter. The adoption of the group of four's resolution, in the unlikely event that it happens, would lead to a dead end. It would freeze the whole issue of Security Council reform for many years and oblige the general membership to live with the status quo.

Furthermore, in the unlikely event that it is adopted, the group of four's framework draft resolution could be expected to result in a spate of candidatures for permanent membership from every region. The September summit would then become a lobbying bazaar as countries seek to promote their national ambitions or to protect their national interests. Other reform proposals contained in your draft outcome document, Mr. President, would become peripheral. United Nations reform would become hostage to Security Council expansion.

At the same time, a vote on Security Council reform would also change the rules by which we are preparing for the September summit. Votes could also be called on other controversial issues that are currently under consideration in your consultative process. The final outcome of the September summit would thus be contested and leave the membership of the United Nations divided.

We believe it is incumbent upon you, Mr. President, to save the situation, to avoid this headlong rush to catastrophe. The process of preparations for the September summit is governed by the General Assembly resolutions regarding the modalities for our work. Resolution 59/291 states clearly that our objective is to promote the "broadest possible agreement on all major issues". The broadest possible agreement cannot be achieved through a divisive and controversial vote.

We hope, Mr. President, that you will declare that such a vote is inconsistent with the rules and modalities adopted for the preparation of the September summit. Such a vote would be all the more questionable in view of the methods resorted to in order to garner support, which were mentioned by the Permanent Representative of Italy. We hope that instead of scheduling a vote, you will resume the process of dialogue and consultations that you had initiated between the group of four and Uniting for Consensus and that you will include the African Union and other stakeholders in such a dialogue. It is only through such dialogue and consultations that we can reach an agreement that can accommodate the interests of all Member States, can be approved by consensus and can stand a realistic chance of securing early and equitable reform of the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 53.

Programme of work

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to inform members that the 13th informal meeting of the plenary, which was originally scheduled for 27 July 2005, will be held on Thursday, 28 July 2005 at 10 a.m. in Conference Room 1 to discuss the revised text of the President's draft outcome document of the September High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. That will allow the necessary time for the translation of the document into all the official languages.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.